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ABSTRACT

The 1985 evaluation of the Adolescent Vocational Exploration Program (AVE) found that this New York State Department of Labor intervention and pre-employment project has been successful in increasing young people's chances of gaining employment and functioning productively in the labor market. Primarily for 14- and 15-year-olds, AVE seeks to prevent dropping out through a program of individual and small group counseling, career exploration, and role modeling by participating employers; and classroom training in pre-employment, work maturity and basic skills. Since its inception in 1980 over 10,500 adolescents in economically disadvantaged areas of the state have been served. The evaluation report includes the following: (1) an introduction describing the scope and causes of youth unemployment as well as a description of the AVE program and its goals; (2) a description of the methodology used in the evaluation; (3) a summary of the findings including the impact the AVE program had on students' gains in basic skills and pre-employment skills, student's gains in work maturity and achievement of academic credit, student and parent satisfaction, and the factors contributing to the overall program success; and (4) conclusions and recommendations. Tables and graphs provide the statistical basis for these conclusions. The roles and responsibilities of AVE staff are appended. (PS)

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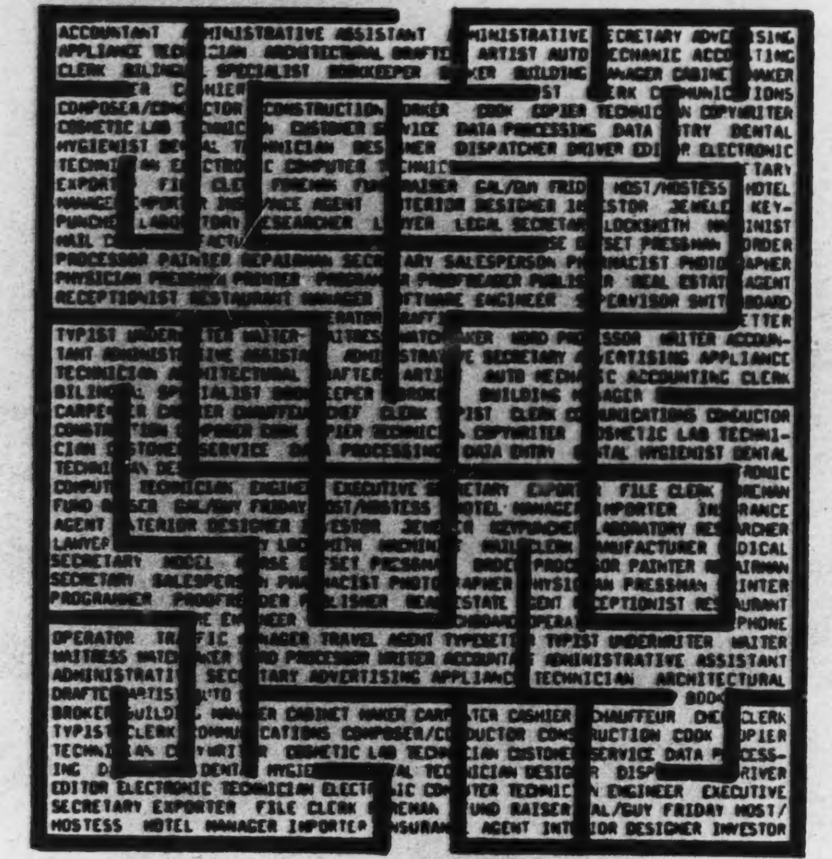
ADOLESCENT VOCATIONAL EXPLORATION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FINAL EVALUATION REPORT 1985

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PROJECT AVE
FINAL EVALUATION REPORT
1985

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PRESIDENT OF THE UNIVERSITY
AND COMMISSIONER OF EDUCATION
THE NEW YORK STATE EDUCATION DEPARTMENT
ALBANY, NEW YORK 12234

September 10, 1985

Dear Commissioner Roberts:

I extend my congratulations to you and to the members of your staff, and the Community Based Organizations that operate A.V.E. Programs for achieving New York State Validation of your exemplary education program, "Adolescent Vocational Exploration." The success of the Department of Labor meeting the Education Department's criteria for validation reflects a high level of accomplishment. Validation also qualifies your agency to demonstrate practices that may be adopted by other interested New York State Educational Agencies.

Please convey my congratulations to your Program Staff for this accomplishment. We wish your continued success in the operation of this program.

Sincerely,

Gordon M. Ambach

Ms. Lillian Roberts
Commissioner
New York State Department of Labor
Department of Labor Building
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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

PROGRAM DESCRIPTION

Overview

Despite an improving economy, nearly one out of every five teenagers in the labor force were unemployed in 1985. A disproportionate share of this problem is continually borne by economically disadvantaged youth residing primarily in large urban areas where the unemployment rate for black teenagers, for example is typically more than double their white counterparts. This condition, coupled with the fact that a significant number of these young people never graduate from high school, does not bode well for their long-term employability prospects. Lacking in critical basic and job-seeking skills to qualify for meaningful jobs, a large number of these youth are lost to alternative lifestyles available on the street—drugs, alcohol, crime, and idleness.

The AVE Program was established in 1980 by the New York State Department of Labor as an early intervention, pre-employment program targeted primarily to youth 14 to 15 years of age. Through a balanced program of individual and small group counseling, career exploration and role modeling provided by over 1,000 participating employers, classroom training in pre-employment, work maturity, and basic skills, AVE seeks to "make a difference" in the lives of "at risk" youth before the risk of dropping out of school becomes too great.

Since its inception, the AVE program has provided career exploration activities and competency-based training to over 10,500 adolescents in economically disadvantaged areas throughout New York State. In 1985, the AVE program was certified as an exemplary program by the New York State Commissioner of Education, Gordon Ambach.

Program Goals

The overall intent of the AVE program is to improve participants' future employability in the world of work. The program goals, therefore, emphasize student attainment of generic employment-related competencies including pre-employment skills, basic educational skills, and work fair attitudes. The specific project goals, which have remained invariant since project inception, are:

- To motivate "at risk" youth, especially those between the ages of 14-15, to assume early responsibility for their career planning and preparation which generally means staying in school (until graduation) and scheduling a program of studies that help them achieve their career plans.

- To increase the future employability of "at risk" youth by improving their career-related knowledge, skills, and attitudes.

- To encourage fairness in employment planning and preparation, regardless of ethno-linguistic background or sex.

Program Delivery

To accomplish its broad programmatic goals, the AVE program involves the active collaboration of a variety of agencies, including community-based organizations (CBOs), service delivery areas (SDAs) and private industry councils (PICs), local employers, schools, and the State Departments of Labor and Education. Each of these agencies plays a unique role in the delivery of services to "at risk" youth:

°The **New York State Department of Labor** provides the major financial resources for AVE and monitors the program to maintain quality control through its staff of account executives.

°**CBOs** are generally the program agents having responsibility for local project administration, as well as complementary educational and counseling services. Each fully funded AVE program site has two career educators, two counselors, a field placement coordinator, an aide, and a program director for the summer; and a somewhat reduced staff for the 14-week fall component.

°**SDAs** contribute to youth wages under the Job Training Partnership Act and also act as program agents at selected sites.

°**Employers** serve as vocational exploration resources, role models and mentors. A number of employers carry on these activities independently after the formal AVE program ends.

°**Schools** collaborate with program agents in a number of ways including identification of "high risk" youth, participation in academic credit evaluations, and provisions of programs and services during the school year.

°Technical assistance in curriculum development and staff training is provided by the **State Education Department** which also evaluates local AVE projects for New York State Education Department academic credit certification.

In addition to these agencies, a **project management team** comprised of representatives of participating state, private, and community-based agencies, works closely to ensure that the AVE program is continually monitored and improved.

During the past year, project services were provided by 23 CBOs and one rural SDA in cooperation with over 1,000 public and private career exploration resource-providing agencies across the state. Approximately 1,200 youth were served by these sponsoring agencies.

Program Curriculum

The core curriculum used by the AVE program is based upon the nationally-validated Experienced-Based Career Education (EBCE) model originally developed by Far West Laboratory. The EBCE model is an individualized, goal-oriented instructional approach that integrates classroom learning with career exploration. In the process, students can earn academic credit, explore different career options, and master many of the skills needed to succeed as adults. All project staff are trained in EBCE curricular techniques prior to program implementation. Training is conducted by the New York State Education Department.

In sum, the AVE program is clearly not "just another summer youth employment program." The program's focus on early intervention with 14 and 15 year olds, its emphasis on basic skills, the active and continuous involvement of a wide variety of community, school and state agencies, the program's curriculum experiential-based career education (EBCE) learning model and its comprehensive monitoring and evaluation attention have resulted in a model program that directly deals with all the relevant issues identified in youth employment research. Its certification as a validated exemplary program by the New York State Education Department ensures potential adopters that the AVE program really works.

EVALUATION METHODOLOGY

Over the last six years, MAGI Educational Services, Inc., has conducted the annual evaluation of the AVE program. The yearly studies have examined both program processes and participant outcomes associated with AVE's unique approach to youth education. The data collection procedures used to gather evidence for this evaluation report included the following: standardized tests, staff questionnaires, surveys of employers, parents, and students, as well as official records such as attendance lists. All instruments were selected and/or developed by MAGI in close collaboration with the AVE Management Team and the New York State Education Department.

SUMMARY OF FINDINGS

The results of the 1985 evaluation conducted by the external evaluator are summarized under the following two key questions:

°Did the AVE Program make a significant impact upon students?
°What factors contribute to overall program success?

Did the AVE Program Make a Significant Impact Upon Students?

°The AVE program accurately identified and served an "at risk" student population. On all standardized measures used, AVE participants scored well below the national average at entry into the program.

°AVE made an important academic difference in the lives of students

-Students achieved statistically significant gains in reading and mathematics as measured by nationally standardized achievement tests.

-Gains, in both basic skill areas, were evident for 92% of the project sites.

-Gains occurred during the summer months when economically disadvantaged youth typically experience a pronounced decline in academic achievement. Thus, AVE was able to prevent the summer learning decay.

-Interestingly, experienced AVE providers achieved greater gains in math for their participants, while newer AVE sites outperformed the more experienced providers in reading gains.

°The AVE program made important personal differences in the lives of students (based on participants' actual experience in the summer of 1984).

-Approximately 50 AVE participants would have gotten in trouble with the law had they not participated in AVE.

-About half of all AVE students would have done nothing during the summer had they not been involved in AVE.

-Only about one-quarter of these youth would have been able to find a job in the summer of 1985 had they not participated in AVE.

°AVE encouraged participants to become more interested in learning.

-92% of the AVE staff and parents felt that AVE increased students' interest in school; the majority of students felt the same way.

°AVE successfully increased students' pre-employment skills.

-Following their exposure to the AVE program, students made statistically significant gains in career planning and decision-making, and in job seeking skills as measured by standardized tests.

-AVE participants were found to increase their specific pre-employment competencies in the following areas at a statistically significant level:

Career Planning and Decision Making

°Defining the Problem
°Clarifying Values
°Discovering Probable Outcomes
°Eliminating Alternatives Systematically
°Starting Action

Job Seeking Capabilities

°Using Occupational Resources
°Organizing and Presenting Facts About You
°Know About the World of Work

°The AVE program had a decided impact upon students' work maturity.

-Students improved their work fairness attitudes to a statistically significant degree; gains were evident for 92% of the project sites.

-96% of the parents observed major changes in their children's attitude toward others, attitudes toward work, and their feelings about themselves.

-Three-fourths of the participating employers felt that students learned more about on-the-job expectations, as well as the importance of "working with others in a job setting" because of AVE career exploration experiences.

°AVE students were motivated to regularly attend and remain in the program.

-92% of the students attended the program every day, and an average of 96% arrived "on time" on any given day.

-97% of the participants successfully completed the eight-week summer session.

°23 of the 24 project sites were recommended for academic credit at the secondary level by the New York State Education Department.

-Over 900 students from these sites were eligible to receive one unit of credit at approximately 250 schools.

°Student and parent support for the AVE program were exceptionally high.

-94% of the students reported that their AVE involvement was either helpful or very helpful, and 82% said that they would recommend the AVE program to a friend.

-Nearly half of the 700 parents surveyed were directly involved in at least one AVE activity during the summer. The activities included neighborhood meetings, special events at the AVE site, field trips, AVE Day supervision, or volunteer work.

What Factors Contribute to Overall Program Success?

°Active employer participation is an integral component of the AVE intervention.

-1,400 different employer resources provided career awareness experiences for AVE participants—almost 60 per project site.

-500 employers served as career exploration job sites; this level of involvement provided 80% of the AVE students with direct exposure to different types of careers.

-98% of the employers reported that they were satisfied with their AVE involvement; 90% said that they most likely would continue their involvement for another year.

-Nearly all of the employers (99%) found participants to be effectively supervised.

°AVE projects reflect characteristics of effective educational programs as identified in the research literature. These characteristics include a high degree of staff commitment, cohesiveness and quality.

-Nearly all (99%) of AVE staff were satisfied or very satisfied with their role in the 1985 AVE program.

-95% of the AVE counselors and career educators reported that they worked as a team rather than as individuals.

-91% of career educators were certified to teach in New York State and 100% had at least a Bachelors degree.

-Approximately half of the staff had two or more years of experience with the AVE program.

- AVE shares many characteristics in common with exemplary youth training initiatives. In particular, the program offers a systematic and comprehensive approach to career exploration that involves the collaborative relationships of many service delivery organizations including schools, local employers, community-based groups and state-level agencies.

I. INTRODUCTION

Youth Unemployment: A National Problem

As a nation, we continually struggle with the problems of youth because the youth of today represent our future, our glimpse at what tomorrow will bring. Perhaps no other area of youth development is more troubling for this nation than high unemployment. Over the past 50 years we have poured millions of dollars into employment training programs to help young people prepare for and find jobs. Yet, the accumulated evidence from these efforts has done little to solve the youth unemployment problem. And today, despite one of the strongest economic booms in recent memory, a significant number of young people are still out of work.

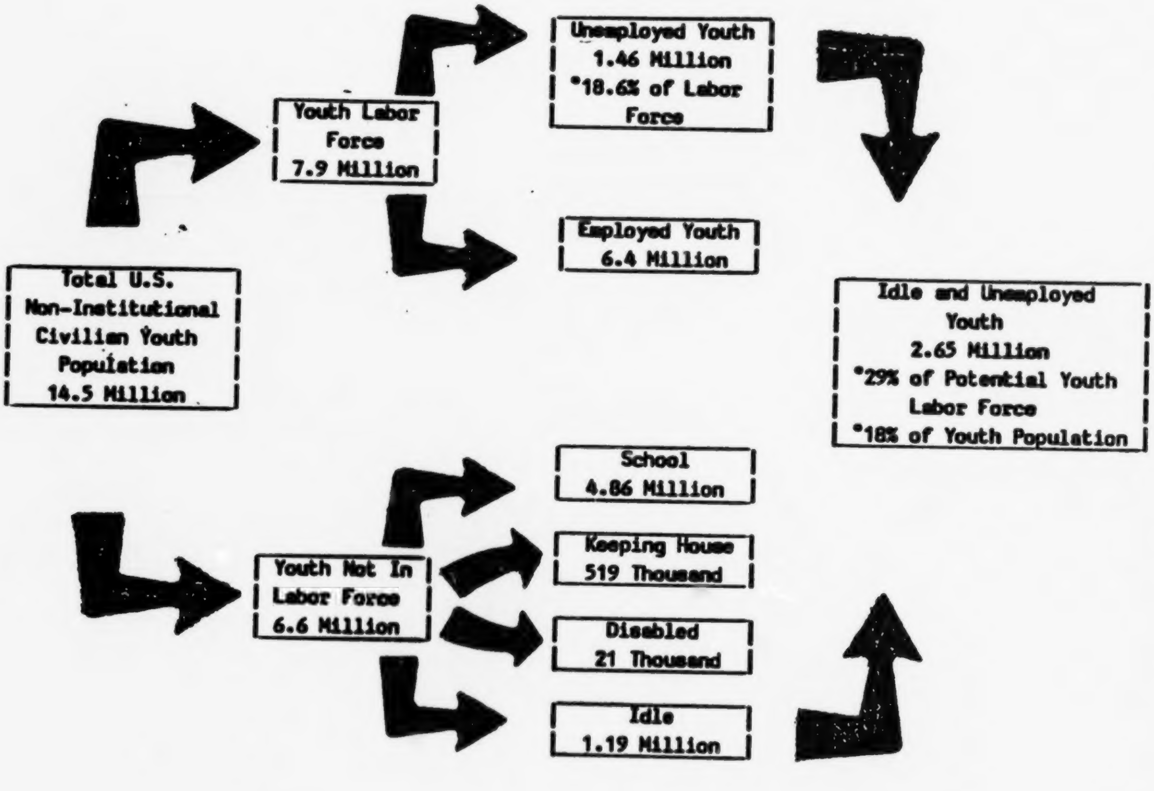
Magnitude of the Problem

It is difficult to know the full magnitude of the youth unemployment problem. But it is estimated that 1.46 million 16 to 19 year-olds, or 18.6% of all teenagers in the labor force were unemployed in 1985. Additionally, 1.2 million young Americans were "idle" which means that they were able to work, but chose not to do so. These two categories, the idle and the unemployed, total 2.65 million, a figure equivalent to 29% of the potential youth labor force and 18% of the total youth population (see Figure 1). By comparison, less than 10% of the the adult labor force was unemployed or idle during the same period.

The unemployment situation is even more disturbing among minority youth. As Figure 2 illustrates, nearly one in every two white teenagers worked at some point in 1985, however, only one in four black youth held jobs. The unemployment rate of young blacks, moreover, was 40.2%, a rate that was two and a half times that of white youth. Finally, over half of the potential black youth labor force was either jobless or idle in 1985, while only 25% of potential white youth labor force experienced the same unemployment problem.[1]

Figure 1

Number of Youth Population in Labor Force and Non-Labor Force Categories: 1985



Total U.S. Non-Institutional Civilian Youth Population 14.5 Million
Youth Labor Force 7.9 Million
Unemployed Youth 1.46 Million *18.6% of Labor Force
Employed Youth 6.4 Million
Idle and Unemployed Youth 2.65 Million *29% of Potential Youth Labor Force *18% of Youth Population
Youth Not In Labor Force 6.6 Million
School 4.86 Million
Keeping House 519 Thousand
Disabled 21 Thousand
Idle 1.19 Million

SOURCE: U.S. Department of Labor

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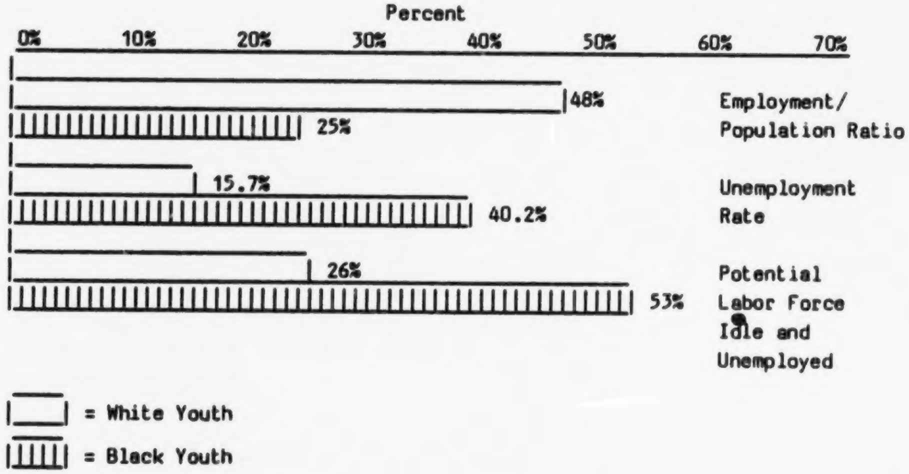
[1] Information gathered from U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics.

Figure 2

Youth Employment and Unemployment Rates by Race: 1985



SOURCE: U.S. Department of Labor

Impact of the Problem

The consequences of high youth unemployment can be devastating. Not only are the personal stakes high, the costs to society are even greater especially when a couple of related conditions are considered: crime rates for youth account for more than 50% of all persons arrested, and the suicide rate for young people has doubled within the past 10 years.[2] Research confirms, moreover, that lack of job or other positive opportunities in poverty communities has a direct relationship to the amount of early delinquency and criminal activity in which neighborhood youth engage.[3] The long-term effects of youth unemployment are equally unsettling. Prolonged periods of joblessness can result in less stable employment as an adult, lower earnings, withdrawal from the labor force, and even complete alienation from organized society.[4] While not all jobless youth will fail to make a successful transition to their adult roles, those that do will face a future clouded with uncertainty.

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[2] National Commissionon Youth (1980). The transition of youth to adulthood: A bridge too long. Boulder, Colorado: Westview Press.

[3] Berlin, G. (1984). Towards a system of youth development: Replacing work, service, and learning deficits with opportunity. Statement before the U.S. Congress Hearing on Youth Employment and the Job Corps, Washington, D.C.

Causes of Youth Unemployment

Evidence points to three primary explanations for the continued worsening of youth unemployment despite this nation's economic recovery.[5] First, the composition of the youth population has changed. Today, minority and disadvantaged youth constitute a higher proportion of the labor force; these young people traditionally have had more difficulty gaining employment because of discrimination or other system-generated factors. Second, the labor market itself has undergone radical transformations. In the past decade, there has been a dramatic decrease in the number of manufacturing and other goods-related jobs——jobs that typically require only limited educational skills and credentials; however, service-oriented jobs which require specialized skills and more than a high school diploma have increased significantly, making it difficult for young people to find employment. Third, and highly related to the first two reasons, the educational deficits among our nation's youth have reached new highs with a substantial number of young people lacking the basic skills needed to function adequately in the workplace. The deficiencies in basic reading, writing, and mathematics skills are considered by many to be a major determinant of youth unemployment. In fact, research has shown that 70 to 80% of the total youth unemployment is highly concentrated among a core group of youth with inadequate academic skills.[6]

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[4] Becker, B. E. & Hills, S. M. (1980). Teenage unemployment: Evidence of the long-run effects on wages. Journal of Human Resources.

[5] Berlin, G. (1985). Youth unemployment: Will the past be prologue. Paper prepared for the National Neighborhood Coalition Conference.

Education and Employment

To a large extent the inadequate skill development can be blamed on the dismally high dropout rate among high school students. According to recent Department of Education statistics, 30% of our nation's freshmen drop out of school before obtaining a high school diploma. In inner-city schools, moreover, the dropout rate has been shown to exceed 50%.[7] The dropout situation is even more intolerable when examined by race. In New York State, which has the third highest dropout rate in the country, it is estimated that only 40-46% of all entering Hispanic or black 9th graders will graduate from high school four years later; more than 85% of white students can be expected to do the same (see Figure 3). In other words, black or Hispanic youth are three times more likely to drop out of school than white high school students. In New York City, the ominous dropout rate among black and Hispanic youths (estimated by some to be as high as 80%) has prompted educators and legislators to conclude that the situation is a "ticking time bomb that threatens to reduce the urban centers of New York to chaos."[8]

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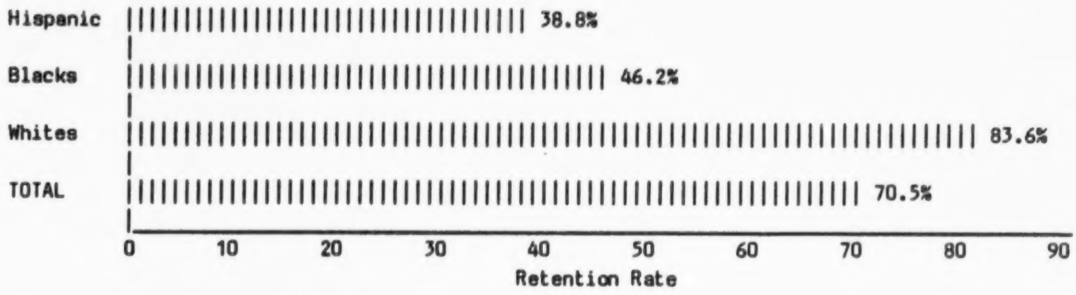
[6] Ibid.

[7] Toner, R. (1986). Education chief lauds state of schools in U.S. New York Times.

[8] Schiffer, Craig (1986, March 31). Dropout rate called 'ticking time bomb.' Legislative Gazette.

Figure 3

1984-85 Retention Rates Grades 9-12 for Various Ethnic Groups



SOURCE: NYSED Information Center and Education

Indeed, the dropout rates have reached crisis proportions. But even more alarmingly, these rates have escalated at a time when the value of the high school diploma has dramatically increased. In the late 1960's, for example, a high school graduate was 30% more likely to be employed after graduation than a dropout was; by 1980 this gap had doubled to 61%. Four years of secondary school also pays off in higher earnings and job stability; a high school graduate can expect to earn 40% more than a dropout, and each additional year of schooling adds 4-6% in hourly wages and about six extra weeks of employment.[9] Clearly, then, the high school diploma is prerequisite for those who hope to participate successfully in the workplace—it is one of the most important ways of meeting employers' demands that young workers have the necessary basic skills and work readiness skills to become productive employees.

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[9] Berlin, G., op. cit.

A Framework for Action

Solving the problems of youth unemployment and undereducation is not an easy task. The underlying causes are much too complex for simple solutions. Yet, the lessons learned from past youth employment training experiments provide certain insights about the salient features of an effective response.[10] [11] The findings suggest that:

1. **Comprehensive service strategies work best.** The ability to maintain employment and advance in the labor market requires a combination of basic education, pre-employment, work maturity, and job-specific skills. These skills are sorely lacking among the groups who run the highest risk of experiencing unemployment problems, Job training programs must therefore use comprehensive intervention strategies to target the multiple areas of deficiencies that exist among seriously "at risk" youth.

2. **Work experience is necessary but not sufficient to provide students with critical school to work transition skills.** Carefully structured work experience enables young people to develop important work readiness skills. But without comprehensive basic skills intervention, there is little chance that programs will have an impact on school·dropout rates and ultimately the youth unemployment problem. Training in basic academic skills along with "hands-on" experience are thus essential elements in effective programming.

3. **The junior high school years are important learning years.** Basic skills remedial efforts generally take place during the elementary years. By junior high school, however, little corrective work is done to solve the learning deficiencies of low achieving youth. As a result, these youth fall farther and farther behind, making the risk of their dropping out of school very great. Programs that concentrate on skill remediation during the junior high school years, however, have been found to produce incremental achievement gains. such gains enable students to catch up in their academic work and provide an incentive for them to stay in school.

4. **The summer is a particularly significant time for disadvantaged youth.** Studies reveal that 80% of the difference in learning between advantaged and disadvantaged youth occurs during the summer months. Specifically, advantaged students tend to make achievement gains over the summer, while

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[10] Ibid.

[11] Snedeker, B. & Snedeker, D. (1985). The PIC youth primer: Improving JTPA programs for youth. Washington, D.C.: National Alliance of Business.

disadvantaged students actually lose ground during this time. The achievement differences apparently reflect differences in learning opportunity—advantaged students have more of a chance to visit different places, learn different skills through summer camp, or read more over the summer months than the disadvantaged. The summer, thus, is an important time for disadvantaged students to improve their academic standing and stem the summer achievement loss.

5. **Individualized, self-paced instruction works best for those youth who are very far behind.** Successful job training programs for low achieving youth should enable participants to improve skill levels progressively, at their own pace. The self-paced individualized training may be more difficult to manage, but it produces substantial payoffs.

6. **Community-based organizations must be involved in job training attempts.** Job training programs for youth work best when they are operated both in and out of school. In particular, the evidence shows that community-based organizations can better serve "high risk" youth who would otherwise leave school and drift into joblessness. But these programs must be strongly connected to the schools and complement the traditional school activities.

7. **Small employers must participate in the employability development process.** Research indicates that small employers provide the greatest number of entry-level jobs for youth. Programs that involve these employers in their learning model, therefore, are more likely to have both short-term and long-term success in securing job placements for youth.

8. **The most effective programs are based upon a collaborative effort.** No agency is equipped to handle the youth unemployment problem alone. Collaborative relationships must be established among training specialists, schools, and private employers to develop and operate effective programs.

In short, the research indicates that for youth employment programs to work successfully, they must be comprehensive, collaborative efforts that provide both work exploration and basic skills training. Such interventions must use individualized learning formats and varied settings to reach targeted students early in their educational careers before the risk of dropping out of school becomes too great.

The AVE Program: An Exemplary Solution

The Adolescent Vocational Education (AVE) Program is a New York State validated (see validation confirmation letter on page iv) community-based intervention that has many characteristics in common with exemplary youth programming initiatives. Designed for young people who are "at risk" of becoming school dropouts, unemployed young adults, or youth offenders, AVE offers a comprehensive, individualized program of career exploration, academic remediation in basic skills, pre-employment skills training, and individual counseling. AVE activities are conducted during an eight-week summer component where students are paid a stipend for their participation, and during a fall component, conducted after school and on Saturdays.

The overall intent of the AVE program is to improve participants' future employability in the world of work. The program goals, therefore, emphasize student attainment of generic employment-related competencies including pre-employment skills, basic educational skills, and work fair attitudes. The specific project goals, which have remained invariant since project inception, are:

- °To motivate "at risk" youth, especially those between the ages of 14-15, to assume early responsibility for their career planning and preparation which generally means staying in school (until graduation) and scheduling a program of studies that help them achieve their career plans.
- °To increase the future employability of "at risk" youth by improving their career-related knowledge, skills, and attitudes.
- °To encourage fairness in employment planning and preparation, regardless of ethno-linguistic background or sex.

To accomplish its broad programmatic goals, the AVE program involves the active collaboration of a variety of agencies, including community-based organizations (CBOs), service delivery areas (SDAs) and private industry councils (PICs), local employers, schools, and the State Departments of Labor and Education. Each of these agencies plays a unique role in the delivery of services to "at risk" youth:

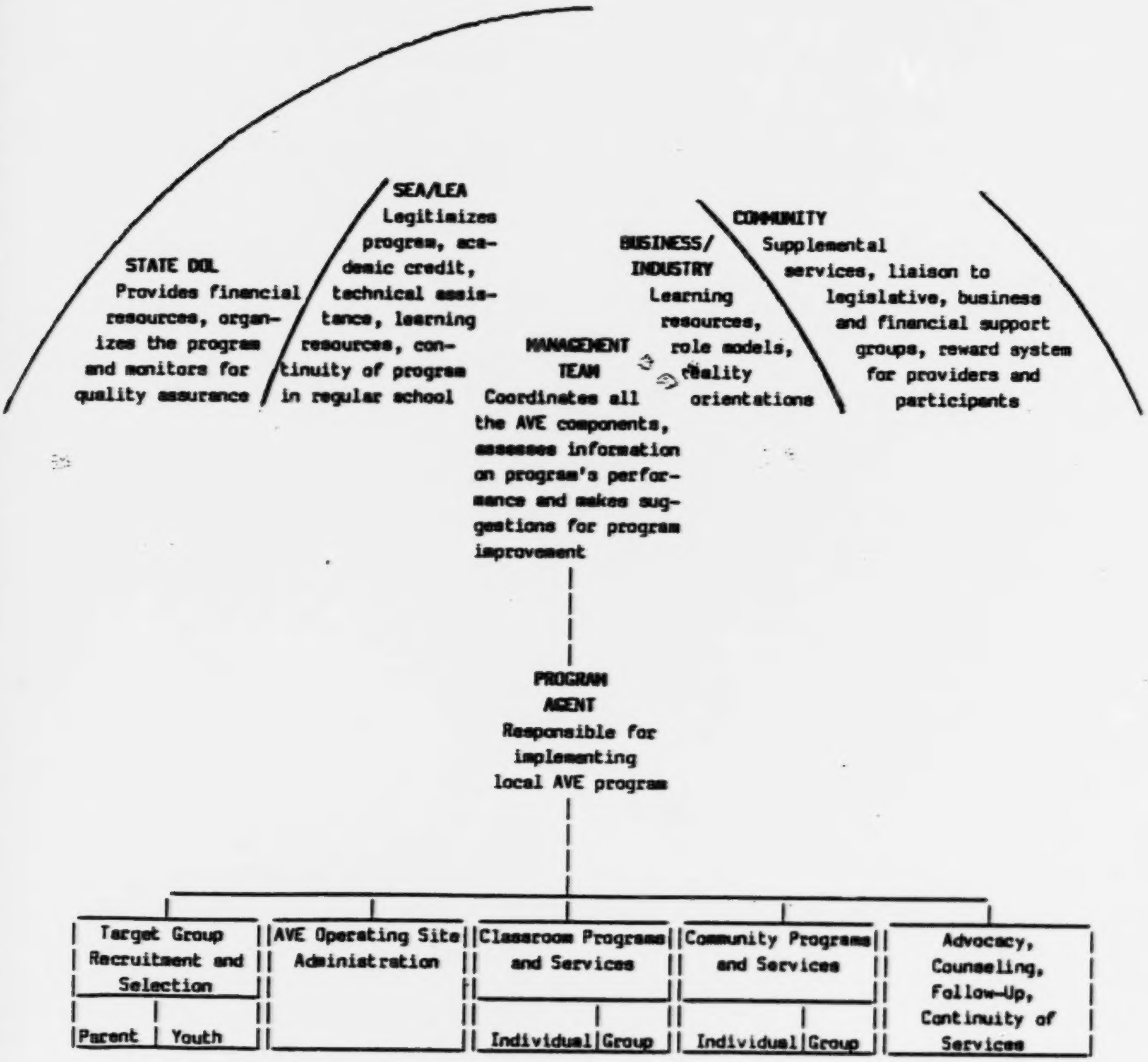
- °The **New York State Department of Labor** provides the major financial resources for AVE and monitors the program to maintain quality control through its staff of account executives.
- °**CBOs** are generally the program agents having responsibility for local project administration, as well as complementary educational and counseling services. Each fully funded AVE program site has two career educators, two counselors, a field placement coordinator, an aide, and a program director for the summer; and a somewhat reduced staff for the 14-week fall component.
- °**SDAs** contribute to youth wages under the Job Training Partnership Act and also act as program agents at selected sites.
- °**Employers** serve as vocational exploration resources, role models and mentors. A number of employers carry on these activities independently after the formal AVE program ends.
- °**Schools** collaborate with program agents in a number of ways including identification of "high risk" youth, participation in academic credit evaluations, and provisions of programs and services during the school year.
- °Technical assistance in curriculum development and staff training is provided by the **State Education Department** which also evaluates local AVE projects for New York State Education Department academic credit certification.

In addition to these agencies, a **project management team** comprised of representatives of participating state, private, and community-based agencies, works closely to ensure that the AVE program is continually monitored and improved. Figure 4 depicts how these various AVE components interrelate.

Through its collaborative organizational structure and comprehensive instructional approach, AVE offers a model solution to alleviate youth employment and employability problems.

Figure 4

A Conceptual View of the Adolescent Vocational Exploration (AVE) Program


STATE DOL
Provides financial resources, organizes the program and monitors for quality assurance
SEA/LEA
Legitimizes program, academic credit, technical assistance, learning resources, continuity of program in regular school
MANAGEMENT TEAM
Coordinates all the AVE components, assesses information on program's performance and makes suggestions for program improvement
BUSINESS/INDUSTRY
Learning resources, role models, reality orientations
COMMUNITY
Supplemental services, liaison to legislative, business and financial support groups, reward system for providers and participants
PROGRAM AGENT
Responsible for implementing local AVE program
Target Group Recruitment and Selection
Parent
Youth
AVE Operating Site Administration
Classroom Programs and Services
Individual
Group
Community Programs and Services
Individual
Group
Advocacy, Counseling, Follow-Up, Continuity of Services

Program History

The Department of Labor introduced the AVE program in 1980 and has continued to support it through CETA funds and special appropriations by the State Legislature. Fifty-five (55) CBOs and three rural County Employment and Training Offices have operated AVE projects over this six-year period. These agencies have served approximately 10,500 "at risk" youth with support from over 5,500 employers, employees, and other community resources throughout the state. The sixth program cycle of AVE, 1985, included 23 urban CBOs and one rural SDA project serving a total of 1,275 participants. The scope of the AVE program is illustrated in Figures 5 and 6 which depict all sites that operated an AVE program for at least one summer. Figure 5 shows all the CBOs in the New York City vicinity, while Figure 6 depicts the sites that operated in the remaining areas of the state including Rockland County, Long Island, Westchester County, and the upstate regions.

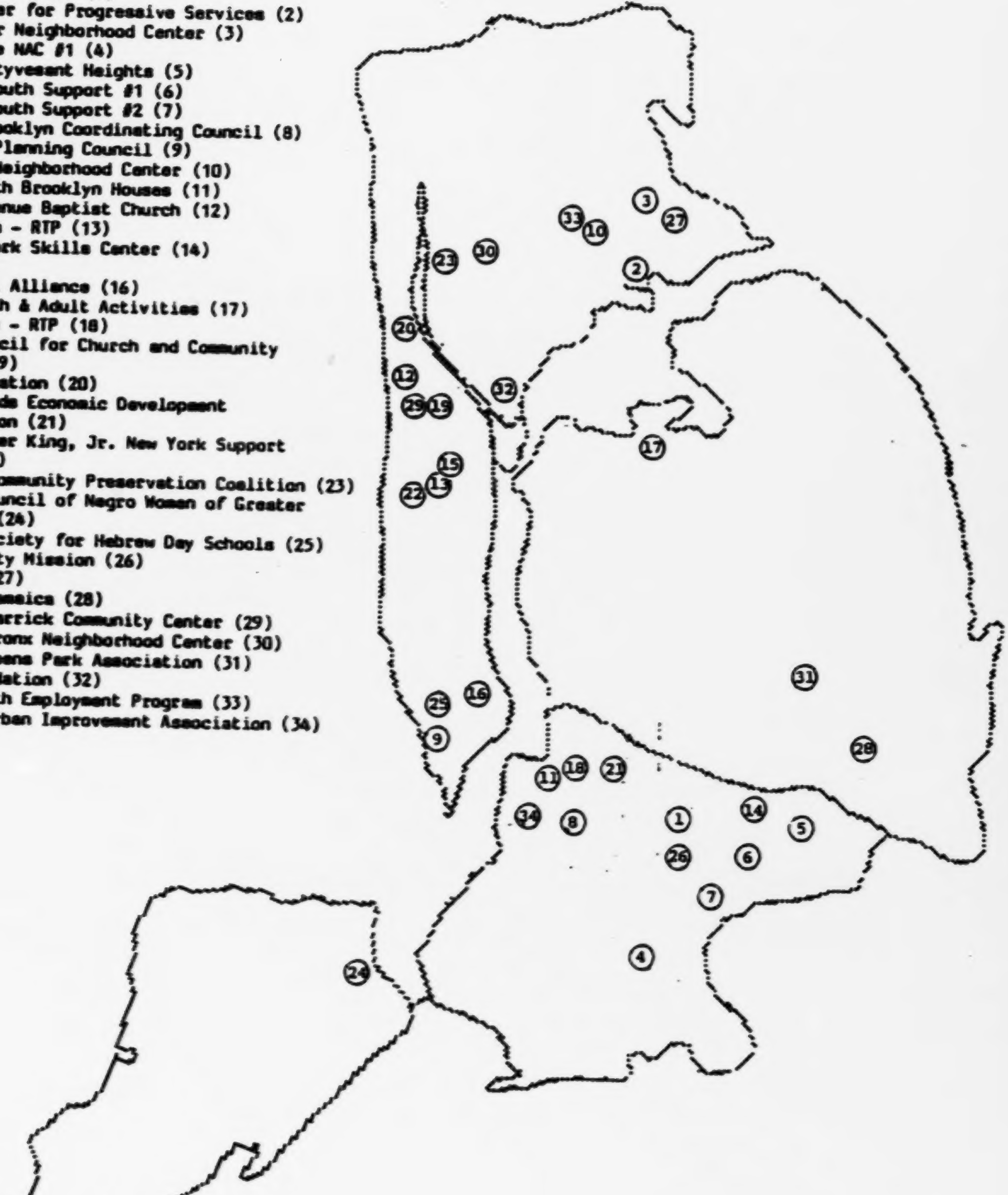
Focus of the Evaluation

In 1980, the New York State Education Department contracted with MAGI Educational Services, Inc., an independent evaluation consulting firm, to design and conduct an in-depth evaluation of the AVE program. For the past six years, the MAGI evaluations have examined several program areas ranging from the organizational structure and operational qualities of AVE, to the impact of the program upon participants. In all cases, the evaluations have addressed those areas that directly relate to the goals of the program and where it is possible to effect the most change. This decision-focused approach has both immediate utility and lends itself to more long-range applications.

Figure 5

New York City CBOs

ASPIRA of New York (1)
Bronx Center for Progressive Services (2)
Bronx River Neighborhood Center (3)
Brownsville NAC #1 (4)
Bushwick Styvesant Heights (5)
Bushwick Youth Support #1 (6)
Bushwick Youth Support #2 (7)
Central Brooklyn Coordinating Council (8)
Chinatown Planning Council (9)
Claremont Neighborhood Center (10)
Colony South Brooklyn Houses (11)
Convent Avenue Baptist Church (12)
East Harlem - RTP (13)
East New York Skills Center (14)
EDAD (15)
Educational Alliance (16)
Elmcor Youth & Adult Activities (17)
Fort Greene - RTP (18)
Harlem Council for Church and Community Change (19)
Higher Education (20)
Latimer-Woods Economic Development Association (21)
Martin Luther King, Jr. New York Support Group (22)
Mid-Bronx Community Preservation Coalition (23)
National Council of Negro Women of Greater New York (24)
National Society for Hebrew Day Schools (25)
New York City Mission (26)
RTP Bronx (27)
RTP South Jamaica (28)
RTP James Varrick Community Center (29)
Southeast Bronx Neighborhood Center (30)
Southern Queens Park Association (31)
Sports Foundation (32)
Tremont Youth Employment Program (33)
Vannguard Urban Improvement Association (34)



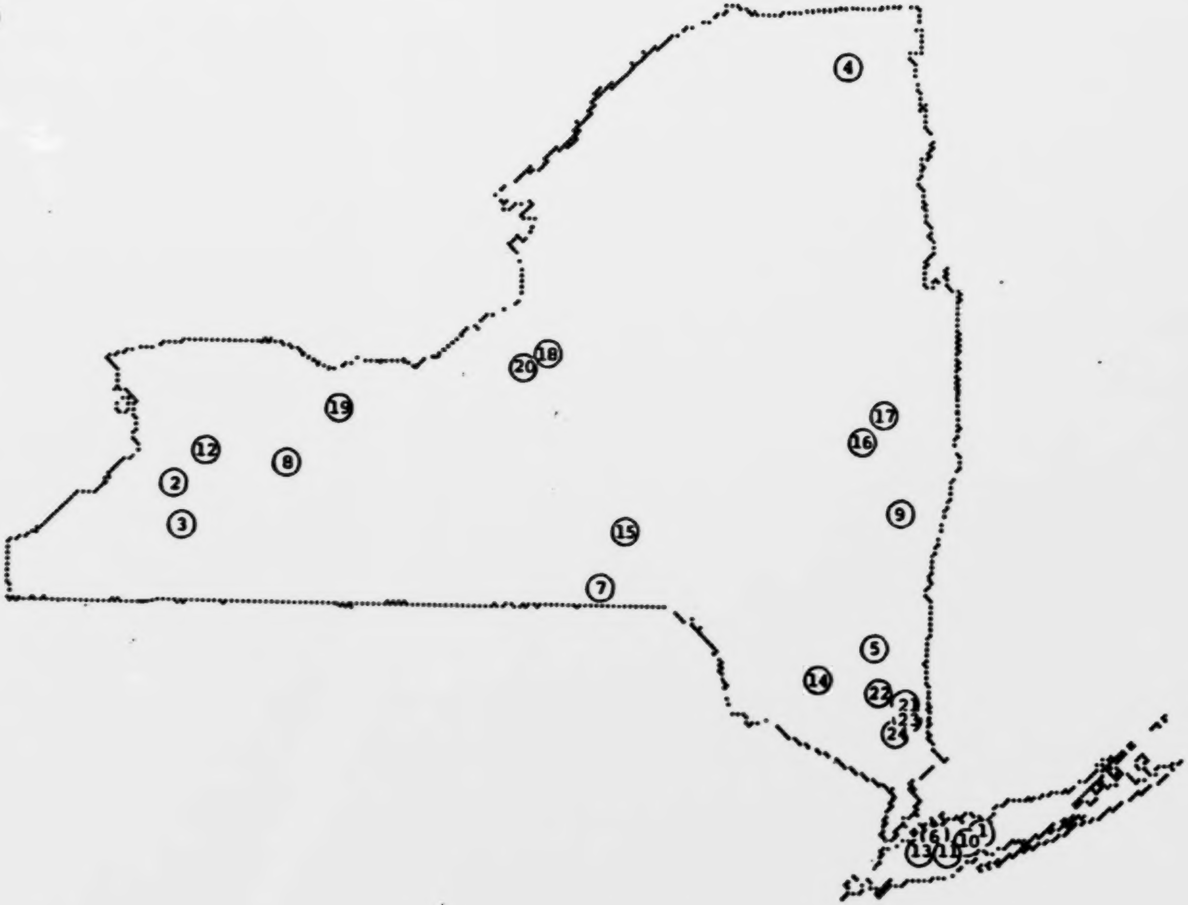


Figure 6
Non-New York City CBOs

Action Council for Community Service (1)
Buffalo Urban League #1 (2)
Buffalo Urban League #2 (Langston Hughes Community Center) (3)
Clinton County, Plattsburgh (RAVE) (4)
Coalition for People's Rights (5)
Education Assistance Center of Long Island (6)
Elmira Neighborhood Houses (7)
Genesee County, Batavia (RAVE) (8)
Hudson Valley O.I.C. (9)
Long Island Minority Alliance (10)
Long Island Urban League (11)
Masten Park (12)
Nassau Economic Opportunity Commission (13)
Rockland Community Action Council (14)
Tompkins County, Ithaca (RAVE) (15)
Trinity Institute (16)
Urban League of Albany (17)
Urban League of Onondaga (18)
Urban League of Rochester (19)
Urban League of Syracuse (20)
Urban League of Westchester (21)
Westchester Community Opportunity Program (22)
Westchester Hispanic Coalition (23)
Yonkers Community Action Program (24)

II. METHODOLOGY

Study Framework

The 1985-86 evaluation of Project AVE was directed toward answering two major questions:

"Did the AVE Program make a significant impact upon students?

"What factors contribute to overall program success?

In responding to the first query, the evaluation assessed AVE's ability to upgrade student competencies in the following skill areas:

1. **Basic Educational Skills**—the fundamental skills of reading, computation, and communication needed for successful functioning in the work place.
2. **Pre-Employment Skills**—a basic awareness of the world of work, awareness of one's own preferences and interests, the ability to set realistic goals, the techniques for finding a suitable job, taking part in an interview, filling out a job application, and presenting oneself favorably to a potential employer.
3. **Work Maturity**—basic entry-level employee responsibilities such as dependability and productivity, the ability to take supervision, and the ability to get along with others.

These areas correspond to the goals of AVE, as well as reflect the employability competencies that the research suggests are prerequisites for stable employment and advancement in the workplace. Furthermore, the skills are highly consistent with those specified by the U.S. Department of Labor under the Job Training Partnership Act (JTPA).

To systematically address the second question, the evaluation examined various program processes. These included the nature and extent of private sector involvement in the AVE Program, the organizational structure of the project sites, and AVE instructional activities.

Chart 1 summarizes the specific student impact areas and process factors that were assessed in the current study.

Chart 1

RESEARCH ISSUES EXAMINED IN THE 1985-86 AVE EVALUATION

Did the AVE Program Make a Significant Impact Upon Students?

°Student Gains in Basic Skills
- Mathematical Skills
- Reading Skills

°Student Gains in Pre-Employment Skills
- Career Planning/Decision-Making
- Job Seeking Behavior

°Student Gains in Work Maturity
- Work Fairness Attitudes
- Attitudes toward Self and Others
- Job Dependability

°Student Attainment of Academic Credits

°Student and Parent Satisfaction

What Factors Contribute to Overall Program Success?

°Community and Private Sector Involvement
- Resource Development and Usage
- Types of Resources Used
- Employer/Community Agency Perceptions of Project AVE

°Organizational Structure of the CBOs
- Learning Environment
- Staff Commitment and Responsiveness

°Program Services
- AVE Implementation Cycle
- Instructional Approach

Instruments and Procedures

Several complementary data collection procedures were used to provide relevant information. The intent was to gather similar data from diverse sources in order to verify, modify, or expand upon initial findings. The instruments and procedures included the following:

- Standardized Tests
- Staff Questionnaires
- Employer Survey
- Parent Survey
- Student Survey
- Information Profile

All instruments, with the exception of two standardized tests, were developed by MAGI Educational Services, Inc., in consultation with the AVE Management Team and Project Staff. The specific data collection methods are briefly discussed below.

Standardized Tests

A. SRA Achievement Tests - The SRA Reading and Arithmetic Indexes were administered to assess student gains in basic skills. The Reading Index measures the major components of the reading process including comprehension, vocabulary, and inferential skills, while the Arithmetic Index assesses computing (e.g., addition, subtraction, multiplication and division operations with whole numbers, decimals, and fractions) and problem-solving concepts. Both tests have high reliability and validity and are widely used by educational programs that target "at risk" populations.

The SRA Indexes were administered to all AVE participants before they started the program (pretest) and then again after their training experience (posttest).

B. Career Decision-Making Skills Test - The Career Decision-Making Skills (CDMS) Test was the primary instrument for measuring student change in the pre-employment skill areas of career planning and decision-making. The instrument is highly reliable and valid, and is one component of the College Board's Career Skills Assessment Program. The CDMS consists of seven scales that represent distinct steps in the career planning/decision-making process. The scales are:

1. **Defining the Problem** - This scale reflects the student's ability to:
   a) recognize the existence of a decision problem
   b) be able to state decisions, goals and objectives clearly.
2. **Establishing an Action Plan** - This scale reflects the student's ability to:
   a) recognize that career decision-making is an active and ongoing, but not irreversible process
   b) be aware of the time element in decision-making and the importance of planning ahead
   c) recognize that there are different approaches to decision-making and that an individual may use different approaches in different decision situations
   d) identify likely actions that might contribute to the solution of specific problem situations
   e) recognize that making important decisions requires an allocation of time, effort and resources.
3. **Clarifying Values** - This scale reflects the student's ability to:
   a) be aware of the role of personal values and preferences in career decision making
   b) recognize that given values may not be of equal importance to everyone
   c) recognize that the solution to many decision problems may require a ranking of values and a compromise of values

   d) be aware that events occur that may cause a person's values and goals to change.

4. **Identifying Alternatives** - This scale reflects the student's ability to:

   a) recognize the desirability of identifying alternative solutions or course of action in a given decision situation

   b) identify and use a variety of resources to develop alternatives

   c) recognize that there may be more than one alternative that will satisfy an individual's values and goals

   d) respond constructively to advice from others.

5. **Discovering Probable Outcomes** - This scale reflects the student's ability to:

   a) acquire, evaluate and use career-related information

   b) anticipate probable outcomes and recognize that there is always some degree of uncertainty about the occurrence of any alternative

   c) infer the probable effects of social and technological change on the occupational structure.

6. **Eliminating Alternatives Systematically** -This scale reflects the student's ability to:

   a) recognize that a useful procedure for reducing the number of alternatives is to begin by eliminating the least preferable alternatives first and then to concentrate investigative energy on the remaining alternatives until only one is left

   b) recognize that one may need to reconsider one's values and goals on the basis of information assembled about anticipated outcomes and the probability of attaining goals and that any decision is subject to review and change when new opportunities or changing circumstances occur

   c) recognize that, because individual's vary in the amount of risk that they are willing to take, some people in making a decision may not select the most desirable alternative or the one with the highest probability of success.

7. **Starting Action** - This scale reflects the student's ability to:

   a) recognize that appropriate action must be taken if decisions are to be implemented

   b) understand the necessity for accepting responsibility for one's own decisions and for the consequences of those decisions.

Participants were tested on the CDMS both before curriculum implementation and at the conclusion of the program.

C. Job Seeking Capabilities Test - The Job Seeking Capabilities Test (JSCT) was administered to determine student acquisition of job-seeking skills. These pre-employment competencies include techniques for finding a job, preparing a resume, interviewing behavior, and presenting oneself favorably to a potential employer. The instrument contains 36 items that are organized into the following four scales:

1. **Using Resources** - examines knowledge of resources helpful in obtaining information about jobs.

2. **Organizing and Presenting Facts About You** - involves skills related to the preparation of a resume and a job application, understanding of how prospective employers evaluate information provided, and knowledge of the different types of previous experience that should be communicated to others.

3. **Know About the Working World** - assesses knowledge of methods appropriate in seeking job opportunities, information provided by various resources, and ability to interpret an employment advertisement.

4. **Job Interview** - assesses appropriate interviewing behavior, including the image to be conveyed, the effective handling of potentially awkward situations, dealing with anxiety, and presenting appropriate and relevant information about the self.

The JSCT was developed by the external evaluators who adhered to rigorous test construction procedures in designing the scales. Reliability was determined by the Cronbach alpha internal consistency method which yielded a reliability coefficient of .90. Test validity was established by constructing the items according to a content grid specifically defined by the subscales; an expert item writer employed by the Psychological Corporation, and two career education specialists were involved in item development. Items were subsequently reviewed by a trained psychometrician and an educational test specialist.

The JSCT was administered to AVE participants on a pretest and posttest basis.

D. Work Attitude Survey - The Work Attitude Survey (WAS) was used to assess student increases in work maturity skills, specifically, fairness in work attitudes in relation to ethno-linguistic background and sex. The instrument, also developed by the external evaluators, measures: a) attitudes towards sex-role and ethnic arrangements, b) sex and racial-ethnic stereotyping, c) perceptions of the differential treatment of the sexes in the social system, and d) support for particular remedies for sex inequality.

Content validity of the WAS was established through several procedures. First, a team of three independent researchers, headed by a test specialist, abstracted items from a compilation of sex role attitude measures used in past surveys in the United States (University of Michigan, 1981). Once the items were selected, the research team reviewed each for content appropriateness. The items were then submitted to Project AVE local staff for review, and based on their recommendations, items were retained, revised, or deleted. The version of the WAS currently in use contains 30 items, all of which were judged by both the research team and local staff to be accurate assessments of the four attitudinal areas cited above.

The reliability of the WAS instrument was determined through both test-retest and internal consistency methods. the test-retest reliability coefficient was .70, while Cronbach's alpha was .79. The magnitude of these coefficients was well within the range generally considered adequate for attitudinal instruments.

As with the other standardized tests, the WAS was administered both before and after the implementation of the AVE program.

Staff Questionnaires

The Staff Questionnaires were designed to gather information about the organizational structure and operations of project sites, the background of project staff, staff reactions to the program, and staff perceptions of student growth as a result of AVE participation. Five questionnaires were constructed corresponding to the different staff types: project directors, career educators, counselors, aides, and field placement coordinators. The instruments assessed such specific variables as: staff recruitment procedures, staff qualifications, roles and responsibilities, decision-making and communication procedures, successful classroom strategies, program impact upon students, program strengths and weaknesses, and general satisfaction. The questionnaires were distributed to 186 staff members at the conclusion of the summer program, a total of 166 (89%) were returned.

Employer/Community Survey

The Employer/Community Resource Survey enabled employers to provide feedback regarding their involvement in Project AVE. The instrument gathered descriptive information about the employer organization such as the type of agency, work focus, and size, and also assessed factors related to employer satisfaction and perceived areas of student growth. Surveys were mailed to employers in August; a total of 178 were returned.

Parent Survey

The Parent Survey was designed to determine parent satisfaction with Project AVE and parent perceptions of student change. The areas of student change corresponded to job knowledge and interest, attitudes towards work, school, self, and others, and basic skills. The surveys were distributed to all parents whose child completed the AVE Program during 1985 (N=1,175). A total of 664 surveys were returned, yielding a very favorable response rate of 57%.

Student Survey

The AVE Student Survey gathered information pertaining to general student satisfaction with AVE, the usefulness of various instructional approaches, and student perceptions of their own growth as a result of AVE. Surveys were distributed in August to 1,175 students; 961 (83%) were returned.

Information Profile

The Information Profile, completed by each of the AVE project sites, provided data concerning student enrollment and attendance patterns. In addition, the form requested information about the extent of community/private sector involvement in AVE and the nature of resource usage, such as student placement activities.

Evaluation Design

The primary research design for determining participant growth in the various outcome areas was the **One Group Pretest-Posttest Design.** Here, AVE students were measured before and after program implementation on the SRA, CDMS, JSCT, and WAS, and the amount of change between the pretest and posttest measures was determined. This design was considered an appropriate choice for Project AVE given the program's "short" treatment interval of only eight weeks. That is, over an eight-week summer period, students would not be expected to demonstrate substantial growth in employability competencies unless they were exposed to some type of career-oriented intervention such as Project AVE. The evaluation design is depicted graphically in Figure 7.

Figure 7

Pretest-Posttest Evaluation Design for Measuring Student Change

Group	Measure 1	Treatment	Measure 2
AVE Students	SRA Pretest	Yes	SRA Posttest
	CDMS Pretest		CDMS Posttest
	JSCT Pretest		JSCT Posttest
	WAS Pretest		WAS Posttest

In addition to the pretest-posttest design, certain outcome areas were assessed through a single group posttest only design. This design was used mainly for the measurement of subjective data, such as staff, parent, and student survey results.

Data Analysis

Standardized test data were analyzed by determining the significance of pretest to posttest gains using a correlated t test. The standard for evaluating the statistical significance of the results was alpha .05. Only students with both pretests and posttests were included in the analyses. Data from the questionnaires and surveys were analyzed using descriptive statistics— averages, frequency counts, and percentages.

Table 1 provides a summary of the 1985-86 AVE methodological plan.

Table 1

SUMMARY CHART OF 1985 AVE EVALUATION METHODOLOGY

	INSTRUMENTS/DATA COLLECTION PROCEDURES										
Focus of Evaluation	SRA	CDMS	JSCT	WAS	Staff Question-naire	Employer/ Community Survey	Parent Survey	Student Survey	Infor-mation Profile	Other	Research Design
Student Impact											
1) Gains in Basic Skills	X				X		X	X			Pre-Posttest
2) Gains in Pre-Employment Skills		X	X		X	X	X	X			Pre-Posttest
3) Gains in Work Maturity				X	X	X	X	X	X		Pre-Posttest
4) Attainment of Academic Credit										SED	Posttest Only
5) Student and Parent Satisfaction							X	X			Posttest Only
Program Process											
1) Private Sector Involvement						X			X	Document Review	Posttest Only
2) Organiza-tional Structure					X				X		Posttest Only
3) Program Services					X					Document Review	Posttest Only

III. FINDINGS

Did the AVE Program Make a Significant Impact Upon Students?

As we have observed, the ability to gain employment and perform successfully in the workplace requires a combination of basic education, pre-employment, and work-related skills. A major thrust of this evaluation, therefore, was to document the extent to which the AVE Program helped develop these important employability skills in its population of "at risk" youth. To do so, student skill development was assessed directly through the administration of standardized tests, and indirectly through teacher, parent, employer, and participant perceptions of student growth. The results of the assessments are presented in the following sections of this report. The narrative is organized according to five headings: 1) Gains in Basic Skills, 2) Gains in Pre-Employment Skills, 3) Increases in Work Maturity, 4) Earning of Academic Credits, and 5) Student and Parent Satisfaction.

1. Student Gains in Basic Skills

According to the research, inadequate basic skills development is the single most likely factor to cause joblessness or reduce a person's earning potential over a lifetime. And those who drop out of school are considerably more vulnerable to joblessness because they experience the most severe learning deficits. An important goal of youth training programs, then, is to help remediate students' basic skills deficiencies by direct intervention strategies and by activities that encourage these young people to stay in school and complete their regular educational training. The goal of remedial education was very definitely a critical focus of Project AVE. Program participants were exposed to a variety of instructional activities designed to improve their reading and mathematics ability and also help them develop more positive attitudes towards education. Were these activities beneficial? This issue was addressed by examining student performance gains on the SRA Achievement Indexes, and by surveying staff, parents and students about perceived basic skills competencies and attitudes towards learning.

Initial Need

As a first step in the basic skills assessment process, the evaluation probed the question of initial need. That is, the extent to which AVE participants actually required remedial assistance in reading and mathematics when they first entered the program. Analysis of students' entry level achievement scores, shown in Figures 8 and 9, provide some insight to this concern. According to the distribution of reading scores (see Figure 8), almost 80% of the AVE participants scored below the national median[1] of 56 on the SRA Reading Index, with an average score of 48.9. This reading average placed participants at the 18th percentile which means that at the start of the program these students could read no better than 18% of the norming group—a rather poor standing. The mathematics entry scores, while better, still placed AVE participants below average. As Figure 9 indicates, 55% of the AVE students scored below the national median of 37, with an average entry score of 36.1. This average ranked at the 47th percentile. Clearly, these data indicated a strong need for remedial academic training among the target group; this level of need has been consistently evident for AVE participants since the inception of the program.

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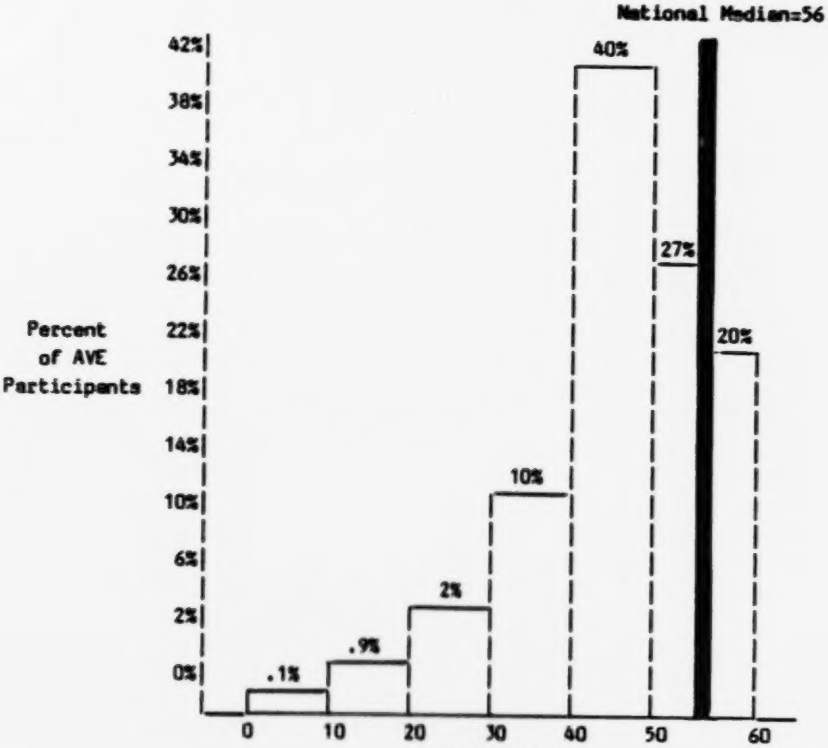
[1] The median is based on 1973 industrial norms for skilled workers.

Figure 8

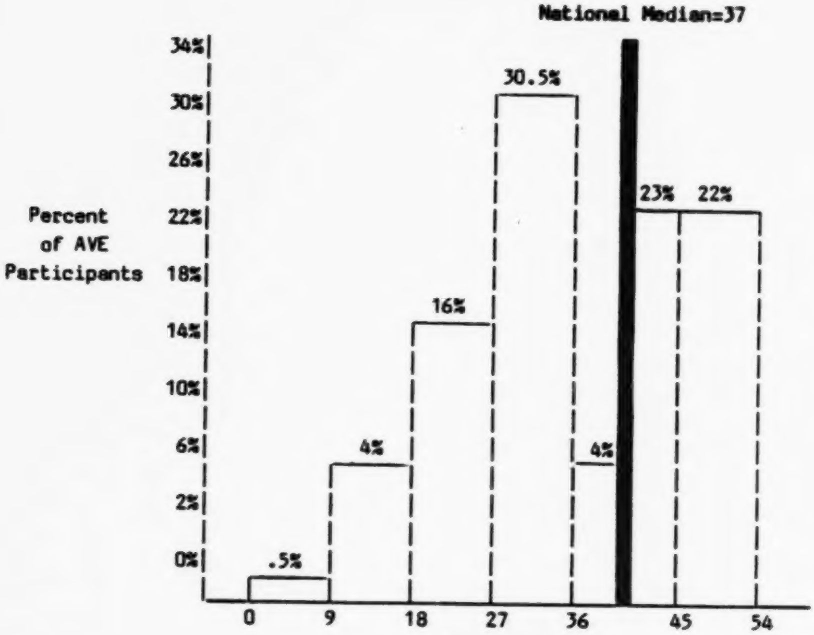
Distribution of Entry Scores on SRA Reading for Project AVE Participants



RAW SCORE
Average Score=48.9
Number of Students=1,092

Figure 9

Distribution of Entry Scores on SRA Arithmetic for Project AVE Participants



RAW SCORE
Average Score=36.1
Number of Students=1,087

SRA Reading and Mathematics Gains

To determine if students improved their basic skills standing after participating in AVE, the evaluation compared entry level SRA reading and math scores (pretest) with the SRA scores obtained at the conclusion of the eight week summer program (posttest). The results appear in Table 2. As this table illustrates, AVE students evidenced substantial improvement in reading and mathematics skills after their exposure to program instruction. Gains in both skill areas were statistically significant and educationally important. The raw score gain in mathematics, for example, represented a percentile increase of 10 points. This change placed students above the national average by seven percentile points. While the gains in reading were not as dramatic, students did improve their standing relative to the norm group by three percentiles. Such growth is remarkable considering that the summer typically has a negative effect on year-to-year learning among the disadvantaged. The fact that AVE was able to prevent this summer learning decay and actually help students improve their academic standing is quite an accomplishment.

Table 2

GAINS IN SRA READING AND MATHEMATICS FOR TOTAL POPULATION

Skill Area	Number of Students	Pretest* Average	Posttest Average	t
Reading	1,001	49.0	50.6	9.23**
Arithmetic	971	36.3	39.3	13.09**

*These pretest averages differ from those reported in Figures 8 and 9, because they are based on the number of students with both pretest and posttest scores available.

**Statistically significant (p<.001)

In addition to the total program results, data were analyzed separately for each of the 24 project sites. Tables 3 and 4 present the statistical results for reading and mathematics, respectively, while Figure 10 summarizes the findings graphically. As the tables and figures reveal, the data were very consistent across project sites, with all but two of the sites (92%) demonstrating raw score gains in reading and mathematics.

Table 3

STUDENT GAINS IN SRA READING BY PROJECT SITE

Project Site	N	Average		Gain	t	Improvement
		Pre	Post			
Bronx Center for Progressive Services, Inc.	49	50.12	50.97	.85	2.82	Yes
Brownsville Neighborhood Action Center #1	49	48.20	49.65	1.45	2.82	Yes*
Buffalo Urban League, Inc.	54	51.14	51.48	.34	.63	Yes
Chinatown Planning Council, Inc.	48	47.87	50.10	2.23	3.10	Yes*
Colony South Brooklyn Houses, Inc.	40	49.00	49.77	.77	1.10	Yes
Economic Opportunity Commission of Nassau County, Inc.	26	45.11	51.03	5.92	7.63	Yes*
EDAD, Inc.	48	48.10	50.41	2.31	4.62	Yes*
Education Assistance Center of Long Island	31	46.16	48.80	2.65	2.84	Yes*
Elmcor Youth and Adult Activities, Inc.	40	49.85	47.65	-2.2	-3.28	No
Elmira Neighborhood Houses, Inc.	47	49.80	51.59	1.79	2.10	Yes*
Harlem Council for Church and Community Change	41	47.12	50.31	3.19	1.74	Yes*
Latimer-Woods Economic Development Association, Inc.	46	51.69	53.15	1.46	2.02	Yes*
National Council of Negro Women of Greater New York, Inc.	45	51.13	52.31	1.18	1.19	Yes
National Society for Hebrew Day Schools	39	45.64	52.66	7.02	11.22	Yes*
Rockland Community Action Council, Inc.	42	47.95	49.64	1.69	2.43	Yes*
Southeast Bronx Neighborhood Center, Inc.	44	48.95	48.38	-.57	-.53	No
Southern Queens Park Association, Inc.	42	49.90	51.47	1.57	2.03	Yes*
Sports Foundation, Inc.	45	50.35	51.24	.89	1.72	Yes*
Tompkins County Job Training Program	17	50.00	51.23	1.23	1.42	Yes
Urban League of Albany, Inc.	33	50.69	51.45	.76	.97	Yes
Urban League of Onondaga County, Inc.	43	49.41	49.90	.49	.48	Yes
Urban League of Rochester, Inc.	46	49.47	52.82	3.35	5.06	Yes*
Vannguard Urban Improvement Association, Inc.	43	49.86	51.06	1.20	2.91	Yes*
Yonkers Community Action Program, Inc.	43	46.25	47.30	1.05	1.64	Yes

*Statistically Significant (p<.05)

Table 4

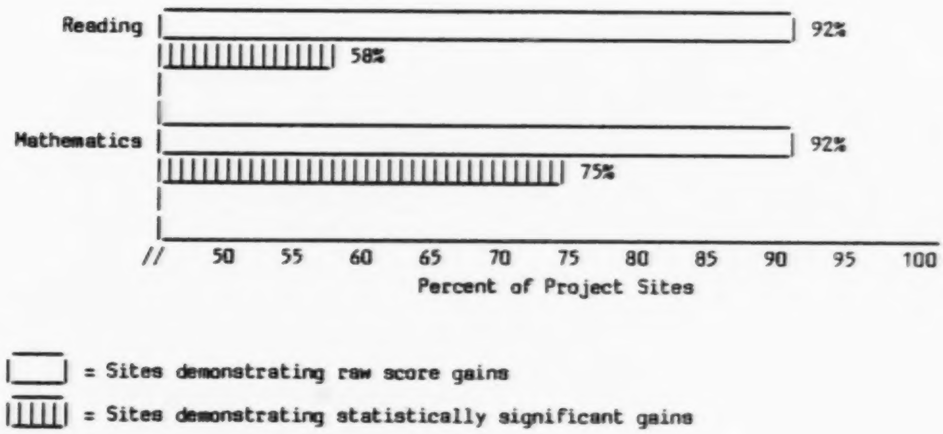
STUDENT GAINS IN SRA ARITHMETIC BY PROJECT SITE

		Average				
Project Site	N	Pre	Post	Gain	t	Improvement
Bronx Center for Progressive Services, Inc.	48	36.14	38.75	2.61	3.08	Yes*
Brownsville Neighborhood Action Center #1	47	29.63	33.27	3.64	4.85	Yes*
Buffalo Urban League, Inc.	41	38.63	37.29	-1.34	-1.99	No
Chinatown Planning Council, Inc.	48	45.39	46.04	.65	1.09	Yes
Colony South Brooklyn Houses, Inc.	40	33.77	38.02	4.25	2.60	Yes*
Economic Opportunity Commission of Nassau County, Inc.	25	34.88	36.44	1.56	1.83	Yes*
EDAD, Inc.	48	32.97	38.64	5.67	4.17	Yes*
Education Assistance Center of Long Island Inc.	31	33.38	34.03	.65	.28	Yes
Elmcor Youth and Adult Activities, Inc.	38	35.78	37.23	1.45	1.31	Yes
Elmira Neighborhood Houses, Inc.	47	38.72	39.61	.89	.59	Yes
Harlem Council for Church and Community Change	30	41.10	45.06	3.96	5.10	Yes*
Latimer-Woods Economic Development Association, Inc.	46	37.08	43.69	6.61	5.64	Yes*
National Council of Negro Women of Greater New York, Inc.	43	36.65	38.90	2.25	2.88	Yes*
National Society for Hebrew Day Schools	41	34.82	43.41	8.59	10.90	Yes*
Rockland Community Action Council, Inc.	42	35.64	39.09	3.45	3.11	Yes*
Southeast Bronx Neighborhood Center, Inc.	44	36.93	39.77	2.84	2.16	Yes*
Southern Queens Park Association, Inc.	42	34.59	36.45	1.86	1.77	Yes*
Sports Foundation, Inc.	45	38.68	42.04	3.36	3.52	Yes*
Tompkins County Job Training Program	17	38.64	37.88	-.76	-.64	No
Urban League of Albany, Inc.	33	39.03	41.39	2.36	2.73	Yes*
Urban League of Onondaga County, Inc.	41	35.07	39.80	4.73	4.28	Yes*
Urban League of Rochester, Inc.	46	39.02	42.10	3.08	4.16	Yes*
Vannguard Urban Improvement Association, Inc.	43	31.37	34.86	3.49	3.65	Yes*
Yonkers Community Action Program, Inc.	45	34.75	38.55	3.80	4.47	Yes*

*Statistically Significant ($p<.05$)

Figure 10

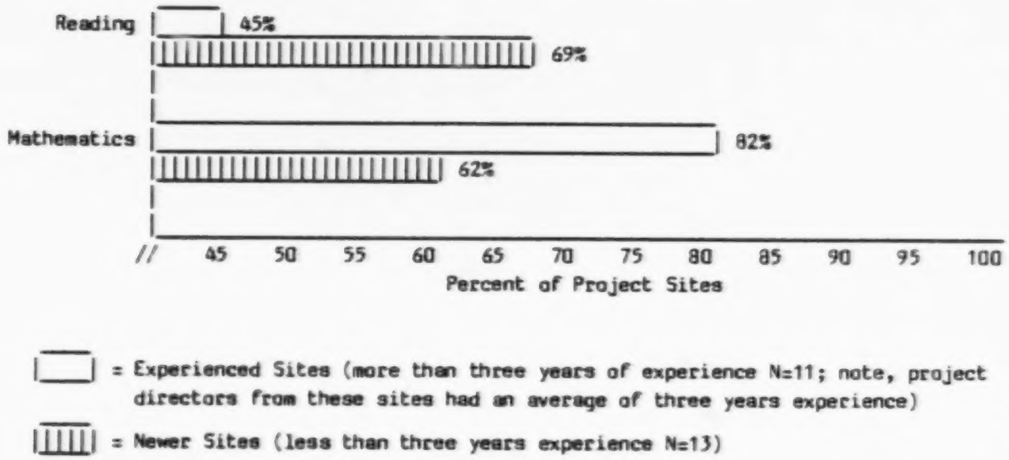
Percentage of AVE Project Sites Showing Gains in SRA Reading and Mathematics



More importantly, the vast majority of sites achieved statistically significant student gains from pretest to posttest—58% in reading and 75% in mathematics. Interestingly, the gains differed depending on site experience. Specifically, nearly 70% of the newer sites achieved statistically significant gains in reading, while less than half of the experienced sites did the same. In mathematics, however, over 80% of the experienced sites obtained significant results, but only 62% of the newer sites evidenced such growth. These findings suggest that sites may have different instructional emphases, a suggestion that will be explored further in the 1986 program evaluation.

Figure 11

Percentage of More Experienced and Newer AVE Project Sites Demonstrating Statistically Significant Gains in SRA Reading and Mathematics



Perceived Growth in Basic Skills

As a final measure of academic growth, the evaluation examined staff, parent, and student perceptions of basic skills achievement. Figure 12 presents the results, showing the percentage of respondents who reported improved student achievement as a result of AVE. According to the figure, all groups basically agreed that AVE instruction benefited student academic development. As might be expected, a higher percentage of program staff reported impact in the basic skills area than parents or students. Still, it is significant that nearly 90% of the parents and half of the participants observed changes in this important employability area. But even more impressive was the large number of respondents who felt that students improved their overall interest in school as a result of AVE (see Figure 13). As noted earlier, proficiency in the basic skills is a prerequisite for successful employment; those who lack a high school diploma tend to be least proficient in these basic academic areas and, thus, are the most vulnerable to future joblessness. Programs like AVE, that can motivate a student to stay in school, contribute much to the fight against youth unemployment.

Figure 12

Percentage of Staff, Parents, and Students Who Felt that AVE Improved Participants' Basic Skills Performance

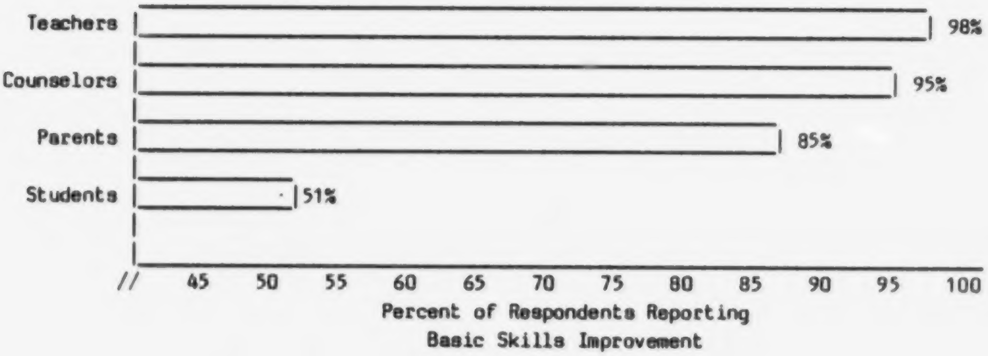
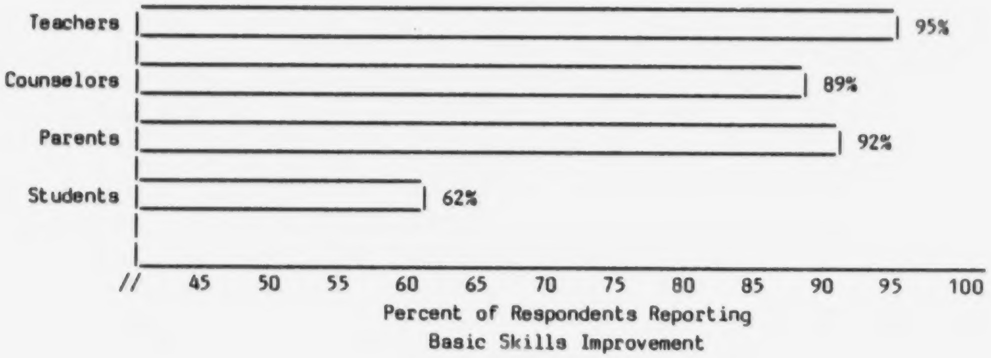


Figure 13

Percentage of Staff, Parents, and Students Who Felt that AVE Increased Participants' Interest in School



In summary, the data pertaining to basic skills improvements were extremely favorable. Students demonstrated statistically significant gains in reading and mathematics after only eight weeks of program participation. That these gains occurred during the summer months, when disadvantaged youth generally fall farther and farther behind in academic achievement, is quite impressive. Also impressive is the fact that teachers, parents, and students alike felt that AVE encouraged participants to become more interested in learning. Open-ended questionnaire comments, such as those found below, illustrate the positive reactions of these respondents. The findings, thus, provide persuasive evidence that AVE accomplished its goal of helping to remediate the basic skills deficiencies of "at risk" youth. The program, indeed, made an important academic difference in the lives of its students.

Teacher, Parent, and Student Comments about AVE's Impact on School Attitudes

> All students disliked the idea of school. As AVE progressed, many were more willing to learn.
>
> (Teacher, Elmcor)

> A 9th grade student announced from the start his distaste for school, teachers, and the like. Within the setting of AVE, and its subject matter, he eventually experienced an educational attempt at learning minus hostilities, pressures, etc. I believed he "related" to us and the program, learned something, and is better prepared, in general for his school year.
>
> (Teacher, Yonkers)

> The biggest change I observed about my daughter is she is more eager to get back in school and really study harder, because she talks a lot about the kind of job she really wants. This program has done a lot for her.
>
> (Parent, EDAD)

> Through AVE, he realizes how fortunate he is to be able to receive an education. He looks forward to going back to school and achieving at least a 3.8 grade point average in his senior year.
>
> (Parent, Colony South)

> I learned that I have to work very hard in school if I want to have a good job.
>
> (Student, EDAD)

> I now know and understand why a good education is important.
>
> (Student, Urban League of Albany)

2. Gains in Pre-Employment Skills

Economically disadvantaged youth often lack the necessary contacts, support network, career awareness, and job search competencies to gain employment on their own. Training and assistance, therefore, is required to help these young people develop the pre-employment skills needed to secure immediate and future job placement. One of the major goals of Project AVE was to increase program participants' pre-employment skills by providing instruction in a range of career planning and job-seeking competencies. These included:

°Understanding the world of work and the factors that influence successful job experiences;

°Ability to identify realistic career goals and develop an action plan for goal achievement;

°Developing personal decision-making skills;

°Understanding job search techniques such as interpreting an employment advertisement, completing a resume, and self-presentation skills.

In order to determine how successful the program was in this endeavor, the evaluation gathered information from several sources including standardized tests—Career Decision-Making Skills (CDMS) Test and the Job Seeking Capabilities Test—and staff, employer, parent, and participant responses to the project surveys.

Career Decision-Making Skills (CDMS) Test Results

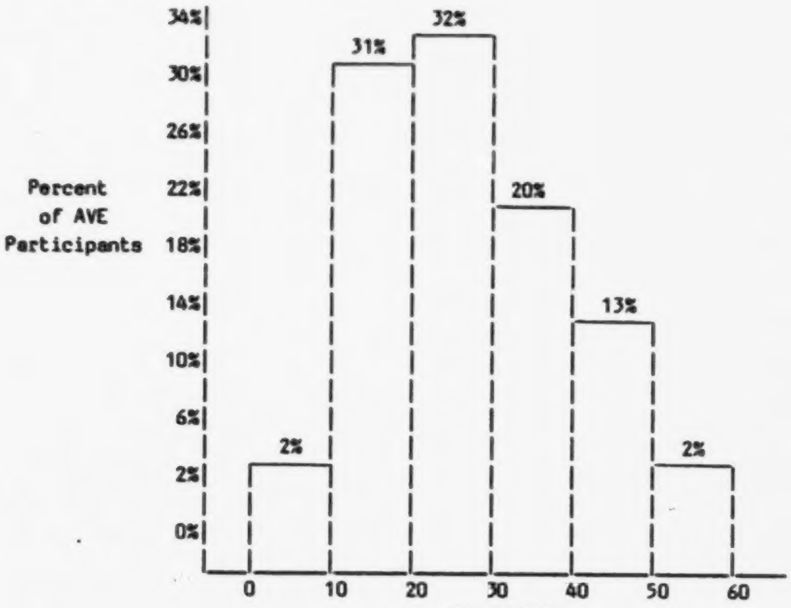
The CDMS measured participant performance in two critical pre-employment competency areas: career planning and decision-making. As described in the Methodology Section, the CDMS consists of seven subtests that represent distinct stages in the decision-making process: 1) Defining the Problem, 2) Establishing an Action Plan, 3) Clarifying Values, 4) Identifying Alternatives, 5) Discovering Probable Outcomes, 6) Eliminating Alternatives Systematically, and 7) Starting Action. Student performance on each of these subtests, as well as the total CDMS, was examined to determine growth in career awareness and decision-making.

Initial Need

Prior to analyzing pretest to posttest student gains on the CDMS, the distribution of pretest scores was inspected in order to ascertain student entry level ability. The percentage of students scoring in each raw score interval is illustrated in Figure 14. As this figure demonstrates, participants were in definite need of career instruction and improvement when they entered the AVE program. Nearly two-thirds (65%) of these students scored below 30 on the test, with an average score of 27; this means that they knew less than half of the items correctly at pretest time. While this initial performance was a slight improvement over the 1984 CDMS results, it was still well below average and, therefore, indicative of instructional need.

Figure 14

Distribution of Entry Level Scores on the Career Decision-Making Skills for Project AVE Participants



RAW SCORE
Average Score=27.09
Number of Students=1,029

CDMS Gains

To measure student improvement in career planning and decision-making, all program participants were given the CDMS both before and after they had experienced AVE, and the change between the two testing points was calculated. Findings based on the total test results and individual subtests appear in Table 5. As will be observed, AVE students achieved statistically significant pretest to posttest gains on the CDMS as a whole, and on five of the seven subtests; subtest gains were greatest in areas involving the acquisition and evaluation of career related information, clarification of values, and assessment of alternative solutions. The results represented a substantial increase over those obtained in 1984, particularly on the CDMS subscales, but still the findings were below those obtained in earlier evaluations of AVE. For example, in 1982 and 1983, students gained six or more raw score points on the total CDMS, and averaged a one-point gain on the subtests. By contrast, 1985 participants gained less than two points on the total test, and averaged less than one-third (.33) of a raw score gain on the subscales. Thus, while the latest CDMS student gains were favorable, they were not as impressive as those achieved in the past.

Table 5

GAINS ON THE CDMS FOR TOTAL POPULATION

CDMS Subtest	Number of Students	Pretest Average	Posttest Average	Gain	t
TOTAL CDMS	943	27.47	29.15	1.67	5.54*
Subtest Results:					
Defining	971	1.81	2.01	.20	4.90*
Establishing	948	5.54	5.66	.12	1.50
Clarifying	969	3.66	4.04	.38	5.26*
Identifying	969	4.70	4.76	.06	.77
Discovering	947	6.69	7.12	.43	3.81*
Eliminating	969	2.84	3.06	.22	3.61*
Starting	969	2.02	2.18	.16	2.93*

*Statistically significant ($p<.001$)

Besides the overall program results, data were also examined for individual project sites. Table 6 presents the total CDMS test scores and Figure 15 graphically summarizes this information. According to the table, some project sites achieved very large raw score gains, that is, gains above five points. Others, however, demonstrated a loss from pretest to posttest. Overall, 78% of the program sites saw an improvement in student performance at the end of the summer program (see Figure 15); this percentage was above the 61% obtained last year, but still below the percentages realized in 1982 and 1983. Gains were statistically significant for 35% of project sites; last year less than one-quarter of the project sites made significant gains. It is interesting to note that most gains were made by the more experienced project sites. Specifically, 90% of the experienced projects evidenced pre-post improvement on the CDMS; only 67% of the newer sites did the same.

Table 6

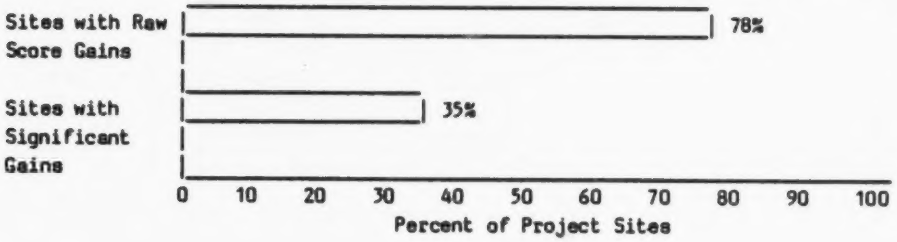
STUDENT GAINS IN CAREER DECISION-MAKING SKILLS BY PROJECT SITE - TOTAL TEST RESULTS

Project Site	N	Average Pre	Average Post	Gain	t	Improvement
Bronx Center for Progressive Services, Inc.	48	27.43	27.64	.21	.13	Yes
Brownsville Neighborhood Action Center #1	48	28.56	30.02	1.46	1.56	Yes
Buffalo Urban League, Inc.	53	29.73	32.24	2.51	2.57	Yes*
Chinatown Planning Council, Inc.	47	30.17	33.95	3.78	2.56	Yes*
Colony South Brooklyn Houses, Inc.	37	26.00	29.83	3.83	2.69	Yes*
Economic Opportunity Commission of Nassau County, Inc.	26	32.07	33.73	1.66	1.09	Yes
EDAD, Inc.	48	29.29	29.87	.58	.53	Yes
Education Assistance Center of Long Island Inc.	31	30.16	18.90	-11.26	-4.54	No
Elmcor Youth and Adult Activities, Inc.	41	27.04	24.60	-2.44	-1.80	No
Elmira Neighborhood Houses, Inc.	47	21.17	22.27	1.10	.96	Yes
Harlem Council for Church and Community Change	43	28.48	39.88	11.40	7.57	Yes*
Latimer-Woods Economic Development Association, Inc.	45	31.04	30.51	-.53	-.44	No
National Council of Negro Women of Greater New York, Inc.	43	23.76	24.60	.84	.43	Yes
National Society for Hebrew Day Schools	41	31.97	41.78	9.81	12.36	Yes*
Rockland Community Action Council, Inc.	43	24.16	25.20	1.04	.87	Yes
Southeast Bronx Neighborhood Center, Inc.	44	29.25	30.56	1.31	2.40	Yes*
Southern Queens Park Association, Inc.	42	27.97	29.28	1.31	1.17	Yes
Sports Foundation, Inc.	-	-	-	-	-	-
Tompkins County Job Training Program	17	22.88	25.11	2.23	1.03	Yes
Urban League of Albany, Inc.	33	27.45	33.33	5.88	4.45	Yes*
Urban League of Onondaga County, Inc.	37	26.97	24.27	-2.70	-1.74	No
Urban League of Rochester, Inc.	45	27.33	28.73	1.40	1.47	Yes
Vannguard Urban Improvement Association, Inc.	41	26.46	25.46	-1.00	-.88	No
Yonkers Community Action Program, Inc.	43	21.41	25.13	3.72	3.41	Yes*

*Statistically Significant ($p<.05$)

Figure 15

Percentage of AVE Project Sites Showing Gains on the CDMS Total Test



Site by site findings for the CDMS subtests appear in Table 7 and Figure 16. the table reveals that five sites—Chinatown Planning Council, Harlem Council for Church and Community Change, National Society for Hebrew Day Schools, Tompkins County Job Training Program, and Urban League of Albany—demonstrated gains on all seven subtests. And one site, Hebrew Day Schools, obtained statistically significant gains on all subtests. The percentage of sites evidencing positive change ranged from 48% on the subtest "Establishing an Action Plan" to 74% for "Clarifying Values" (see Figure 16). Statistically significant gains were achieved by the greatest number of sites (i.e., 39%) on the subtest "Defining the Problem", and by the fewest number of sites (i.e., 17%) on "Establishing an Action Plan" and "Identifying Alternatives." These findings, again, were better than those observed in 1984, but not as impressive as the 1982 and 1983 results.

Table 7

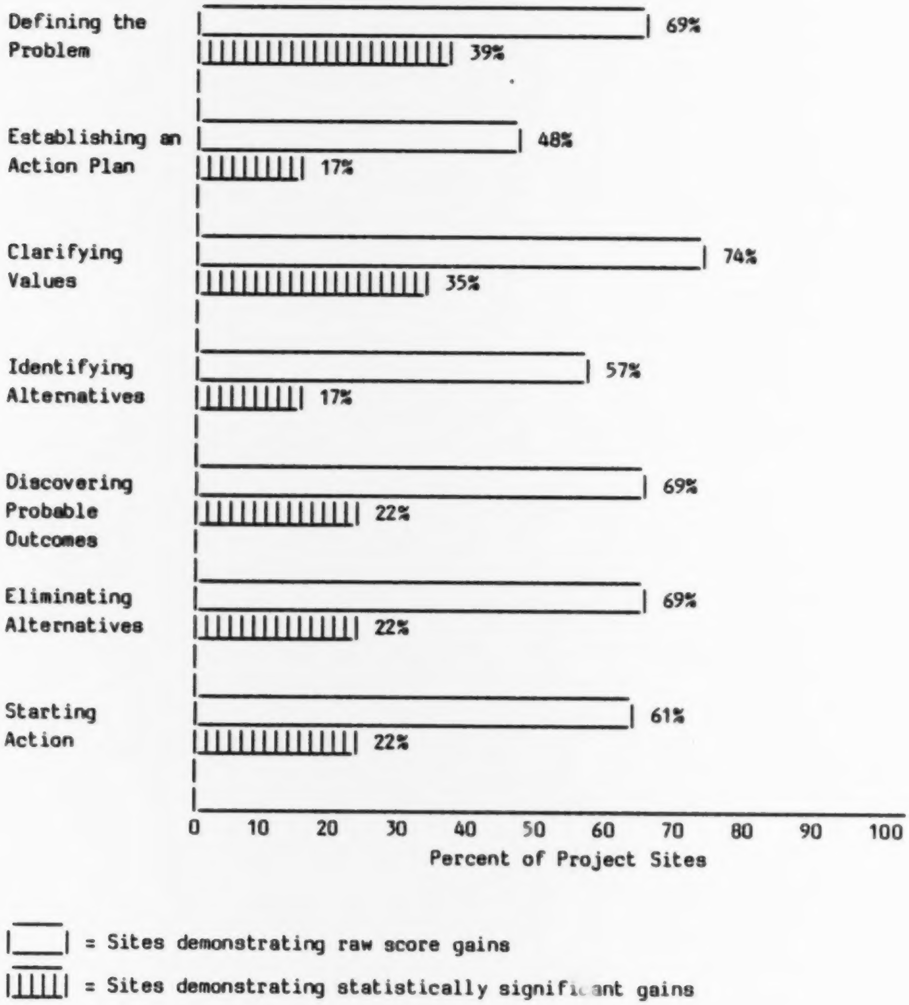
STUDENT GAINS IN CAREER DECISION-MAKING SKILLS BY PROJECT SITE
SUBTEST RESULTS

Project Site	Defin-ing	Estab-lishing	Clari-fying	Identi-fying	Discov-ing	Elimi-nating	Start-ing
Bronx Center for Progressive Services, Inc.	No	No	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	No
Brownsville Neighborhood Action Center #1	Yes*	Yes	Yes*	No	Yes	Yes	Yes
Buffalo Urban League, Inc.	No	Yes	Yes*	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes*
Chinatown Planning Council, Inc.	Yes	Yes*	Yes*	Yes*	Yes	Yes	Yes*
Colony South Brooklyn Houses, Inc.	Yes*	Yes*	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes
Economic Opportunity Commission of Nassau County, Inc.	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	Yes	No
EDAD, Inc.	No	Yes	No	Yes*	No	No	Yes
Education Assistance Center of Long Island, Inc.	No	No	No	No	No	No	No
Elmcor Youth and Adult Activities, Inc.	No	No	No	No	No	No	No
Elmira Neighborhood Houses, Inc.	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes
Harlem Council for Church and Community Change	Yes*	Yes*	Yes*	Yes	Yes*	Yes*	Yes*
Latimer-Woods Economic Development Association, Inc.	Yes	No	Yes	No	No	Yes	No
National Council of Negro Women of Greater New York, Inc.	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	Yes	Yes	No
National Society for Hebrew Day Schools	Yes*	Yes*	Yes*	Yes*	Yes*	Yes*	Yes*
Rockland Community Action Council, Inc.	No	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Southeast Bronx Neighborhood Center, Inc.	Yes*	No	Yes	Yes	No	Yes*	Yes*
Southern Queens Park Association, Inc.	Yes*	No	Yes	Yes	Yes*	No	Yes
Sports Foundation, Inc.	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Tompkins County Job Training Program	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Urban League of Albany Area, Inc.	Yes*	Yes	Yes*	Yes*	Yes*	Yes*	Yes
Urban League of Onondaga County, Inc.	Yes	No	No	No	No	No	No
Urban League of Rochester, Inc.	No	No	Yes*	Yes	Yes	Yes	No
Vannguard Urban Improvement Association, Inc.	Yes*	No	No	No	No	Yes	No
Yonkers Community Action Program, Inc.	Yes*	No	Yes*	Yes	Yes*	Yes*	Yes

*Statistically significant (p<.05)

Figure 16

Percentage of AVE Project Sites Showing Gains
on the CDMS Subtest



The CDMS findings, thus, indicate that AVE successfully increased students' career planning and decision-making skills, particularly in areas related to acquiring and evaluating career-related information, clarifying values, and eliminating alternatives. These are positive findings which, considered by themselves, would deserve acclaim. Nonetheless, a comparison of gains across program years raises some concern about the magnitude of the most recent results. For the past two years, AVE participants have shown a decline on the CDMS total scale and individual subtests. This decline may be due to a number of factors including student, as well as program characteristics. In terms of students, 1984 and 1985 AVE participants began the program with much lower CDMS scores than previous cohorts. It is likely that these students being less decision-oriented from the start could not profit as much from decision-making instruction. Another reason relates to instructional emphasis. Decision-making skills may appear more removed from the long-term goal of job placement than other pre-employment competencies, such as filling out a job application, taking part in an interview, and learning about various employment-related resources. Given the difficulties disadvantaged youth typically encounter in attempting to enter the job market, it is possible that career educators found it more important to emphasize the concrete techniques for finding suitable employment rather than the abstract career decision-making skills of defining a problem, clarifying alternatives, and so forth. Whatever the reason, program staff must seriously consider the implications of the findings for future action. If decision-making is still to be considered an important outcome of AVE, then alternative staff development activities may be needed to adequately prepare or motivate teachers to address decisional skills.

Job Seeking Capabilities Test (JSCT) Results

The JSCT assessed a variety of job seeking skills in four subscale areas: Using Resources, Organizing and Presenting Facts About You, Know About the Working World, and the Job Interview. Student gains on each of these subscales and the total JSCT were examined to determine program impact regarding job search and self-presentation skills.

Initial Need

As with the other standardized tests, the JSCT pretest distribution was inspected to provide an indication of initial student need. Figure 17 reports the percentage of students scoring in each raw score interval. As these scores illustrate, 80% of entering AVE students obtained a raw score above 18 which means that they were able to correctly answer more than half of the items on the test at pretest time. Moreover, 55% of the students scored above 24, meaning that they could answer two-thirds or more of the test items correctly. These entry scores suggest that AVE students initially knew more about job seeking skills than they did about the other employability competencies assessed at pretest time (e.g., basic skills, and career planning/decision-making). However, their overall average score of 23.8 would imply that there was still room for improvement. Also, this average was 5-7 points below pretest averages obtained in other job-related studies using the JSCT,[2] which further confirms the need for improvement among AVE participants.

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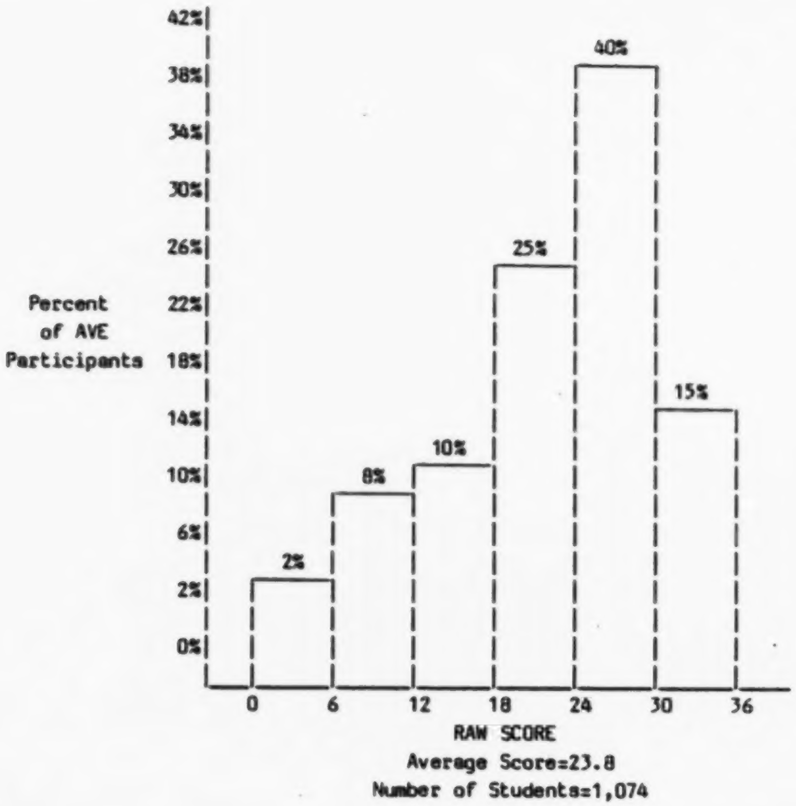
[2] These studies have been conducted by MAGI Educational Services with several different youth and adult populations.

Figure 17

Distribution of Entry Level Scores on the Job Seeking Capabilities Test for Project AVE Participants



JSCT Gains

The pretest-posttest analysis of the JSCT total scale and individual subtests appears in Table 8. Examination of the gains reveals that, program-wide, students improved their job search skills after exposure to AVE instruction; statistically significant gains were made on the total JSCT, as well as on three of the four subtests. The greatest subscale growth occurred on "Organizing and Presenting Facts About You"—an important scale that assesses the job skills of preparing a resume and job application, understanding how prospective employers evaluate information, and knowledge of the different types of experience that should be communicated to others.

Table 8

GAINS ON THE JSCT FOR TOTAL POPULATION

JSCT Subtest	Number of Students	Pretest Average	Posttest Average	Gain	t
TOTAL JSCT	997	24.06	25.10	1.04	6.17*
Subtest Results:					
Using Resources	1025	6.17	6.29	.12	1.81*
Organizing Facts	1000	9.85	10.47	.62	7.26*
Working World	1025	3.41	3.52	.11	2.01*
Job Interview	1025	4.35	4.39	.04	.83

*Statistically significant (p<.01)

Gains on the JSCT were also observed in the majority of project sites. Table 9 and Figure 18, which present the total test results for individual sites, indicate that three-quarters of the AVE programs demonstrated positive growth from pretest to posttest; gains were statistically significant for 46% of the sites. These site-by-site percentages were similar to those reported for CDMS. But unlike the CDMS results, the gains were consistent across different levels of site experience. That is, the same percentage of the newer and more experienced project sites achieved positive growth on the JSCT. On the CDMS, however, many more experienced sites than newer sites evidenced positive change.

Table 9

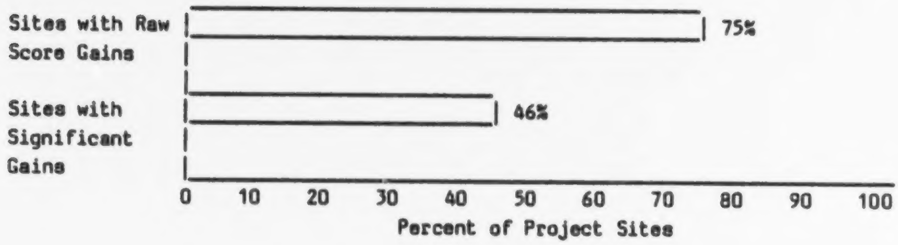
STUDENT GAINS ON THE JOB SEEKING CAPABILITIES TEST BY PROJECT SITE
TOTAL TEST RESULTS

Project Site	N	Average Pre	Average Post	Gain	t	Improvement
Bronx Center for Progressive Services, Inc.	48	25.18	26.35	1.67	1.49	Yes
Brownsville Neighborhood Action Center #1	50	24.18	27.40	3.20	4.64	Yes*
Buffalo Urban League, Inc.	55	26.74	28.20	1.46	2.07	Yes*
Chinatown Planning Council, Inc.	47	24.57	27.27	2.70	4.78	Yes*
Colony South Brooklyn Houses, Inc.	36	22.08	22.88	.80	.78	Yes
Economic Opportunity Commission of Nassau County, Inc.	26	24.61	26.84	2.23	1.97	Yes*
EDAD, Inc.	48	27.14	25.87	-1.27	-1.22	No
Education Assistance Center of Long Island Inc.	31	18.93	19.29	.35	.25	Yes
Elmcor Youth and Adult Activities, Inc.	38	9.84	8.02	-1.82	-2.51	No
Elmira Neighborhood Houses, Inc.	49	24.12	21.89	-2.22	-2.65	No
Harlem Council for Church and Community Change	47	23.19	24.65	1.46	3.77	Yes*
Latimer-Woods Economic Development Association, Inc.	45	25.91	26.48	.57	1.28	Yes
National Council of Negro Women of Greater New York, Inc.	44	27.84	27.86	-.16	-.22	No
National Society for Hebrew Day Schools	41	20.26	25.75	5.49	5.85	Yes*
Rockland Community Action Council, Inc.	43	22.97	25.58	2.61	3.23	Yes*
Southeast Bronx Neighborhood Center, Inc.	44	24.50	24.29	-.20	-.31	No
Southern Queens Park Association, Inc.	38	25.55	27.21	1.64	1.83	Yes*
Sports Foundation, Inc.	45	24.68	27.11	2.43	4.66	Yes*
Tompkins County Job Training Program	16	24.68	25.81	1.13	1.25	Yes
Urban League of Albany, Inc.	32	26.93	27.09	.16	.17	Yes
Urban League of Onondaga County, Inc.	43	24.67	24.51	-.16	-.19	No
Urban League of Rochester, Inc.	46	27.06	28.17	1.11	1.75	Yes*
Vannguard Urban Improvement Association, Inc.	42	24.02	25.66	1.64	2.44	Yes*
Yonkers Community Action Program, Inc.	43	24.02	24.88	.86	.96	Yes

*Statistically Significant ($p<.05$)

Figure 18

Percentage of AVE Project Sites Showing Gains on the JSCT Total Test



JSCT subtest results for individual sites appear in Table 10 and Figure 19. Inspection of the table indicates that one-quarter of the 24 projects demonstrated improvement in all subtests. These six project sites were: Brownsville Neighborhood Action Center, Chinatown Planning Council, Harlem Council for Church and Community Change, National Society for Hebrew Day Schools, Rockland Community Action Council, and Southern Queens Park Association. Moreover, two of the sites——Brownsville and Hebrew Day Schools——evidenced statistically significant growth on the four subtests. The percentage of sites showing improvement ranged from 38% on the "Job Interview" scale to 83% on the scale, "Organizing Facts." More than half of the sites also experienced statistically significant growth on this latter scale while less than one-fourth did the same on the other three JSCT scales (see Figure 19).

Table 10

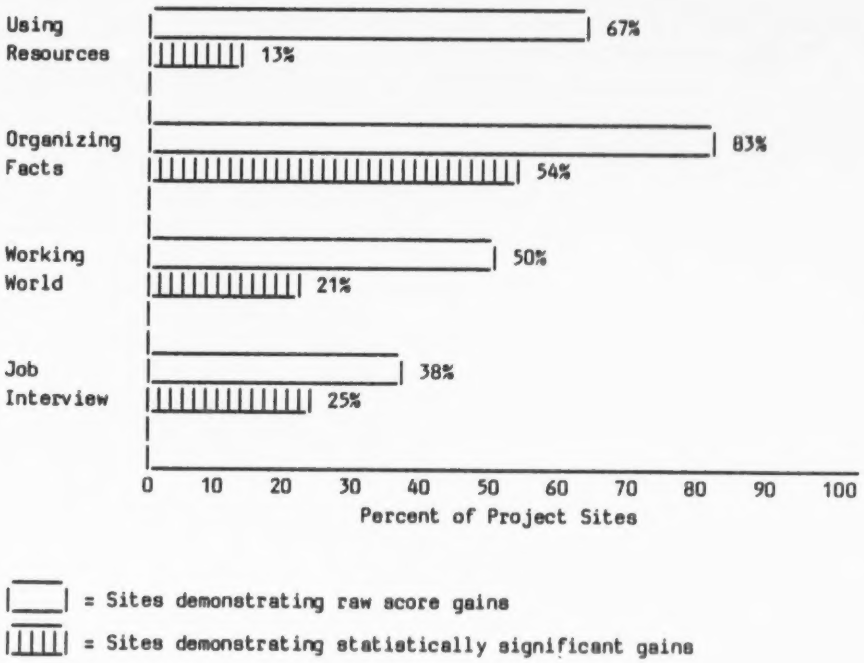
STUDENT GAINS ON THE JOB SEEKING CAPABILITIES TEST BY PROJECT SITE SUBSCALE RESULTS

Project Site	Using Resources	Organizing	Working World	Job Interview
Bronx Center for Progressive Services, Inc.	No	Yes	No	Yes
Brownsville Neighborhood Action Center #1	Yes*	Yes*	Yes*	Yes*
Buffalo Urban League, Inc.	No	Yes*	Yes	Yes*
Chinatown Planning Council, Inc.	Yes	Yes*	Yes*	Yes
Colony South Brooklyn Houses, Inc.	No	Yes	No	No
Economic Opportunity Commission of Nassau County Inc.	No	Yes*	No	No
EDAD, Inc.	No	Yes	No	No
Education Assistance Center of Long Island	No	Yes	Yes	No
Elmcor Youth and Adult Activities, Inc.	Yes	No	No	No
Elmira Neighborhood Houses, Inc.	No	No	Yes	No
Harlem Council for Church and Comunity Change	Yes	Yes	Yes*	Yes*
Latimer-Woods Economic Development Association, Inc.	Yes	Yes*	Yes	No
National Council of Negro Women of Greater New York, Inc.	Yes	Yes*	No	No
National Society for Hebrew Day Schools	Yes*	Yes*	Yes*	Yes*
Rockland Community Action Council, Inc.	Yes	Yes*	Yes	Yes*
Southeast Bronx Neighborhood Center, Inc.	No	Yes*	No	No
Southern Queens Park Association, Inc.	Yes	Yes*	Yes	Yes
Sports Foundation, Inc.	Yes	Yes*	Yes*	No
Tompkins County Job Training Program	Yes*	No	No	No
Urban League of Albany Area, Inc.	Yes	Yes	No	No
Urban League of Onondaga County, Inc.	Yes	No	Yes	No
Urban League of Rochester, Inc.	Yes	Yes*	No	No
Vannguard Urban Improvement Association, Inc.	Yes	Yes*	No	Yes*
Yonkers Community Action Program, Inc.	Yes	Yes	Yes	No

*Statistically significant ($p<.05$)

Figure 19

Percentage of AVE Project Sites Showing Gains on the JSCT Subtest



In summary, AVE students demonstrated statistically significant gains in job seeking skills following their participation in the AVE Project. The gains were observed for the program, as a whole, as well as for three-quarters of the individual sites. The findings, thus, suggest that AVE successfully imparted many of the job search competencies that young people need to gain employment on their own. These critical competencies include the ability to obtain information about jobs, understanding job applications and how to complete a resume, and knowing how to interpret employment advertisements.

Perceived Growth in Pre-Employment Skills

The final assessment of pre-employment skill development involved an analysis of staff, parent, and student survey data. Along these lines, respondents were asked to evaluate AVE's role in helping students to:

-become clearer about future job choices;
-become more motivated in preparing for a job; and
-know more about how to find a job.

Findings are provided in Figure 20. As can be seen, perceptions across groups were very favorable. Over 90% of the parents, teachers, and counselors felt that AVE effectively improved participants' career planning and job-seeking skills; 80% of the students felt the same way. Ratings from employers confirmed these positive results. When asked to check the type of knowledge and skills that students learned as a result of work site placement, nearly three out of four employers indicated, "a basic knowledge of the demands of work," and over half said, "increased motivation to learn about jobs"—two very important pre-employment skills (see Figure 21).

Figure 20

Percentage of Staff, Parents, and Students Who Felt that AVE Improved Participants' Pre-Employment Skill Development

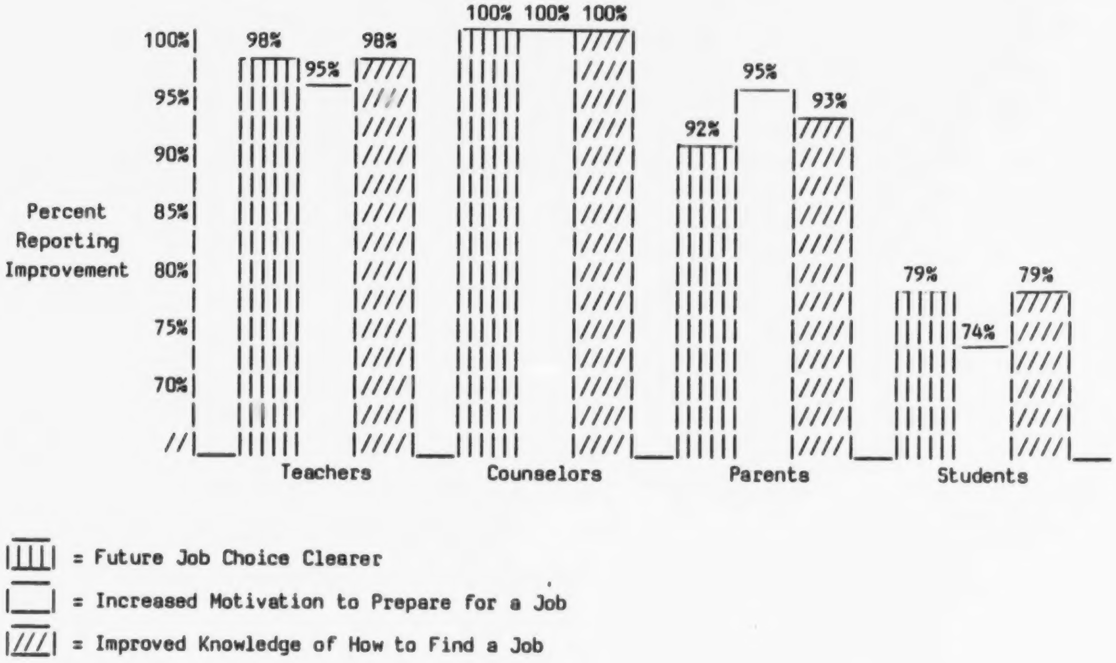
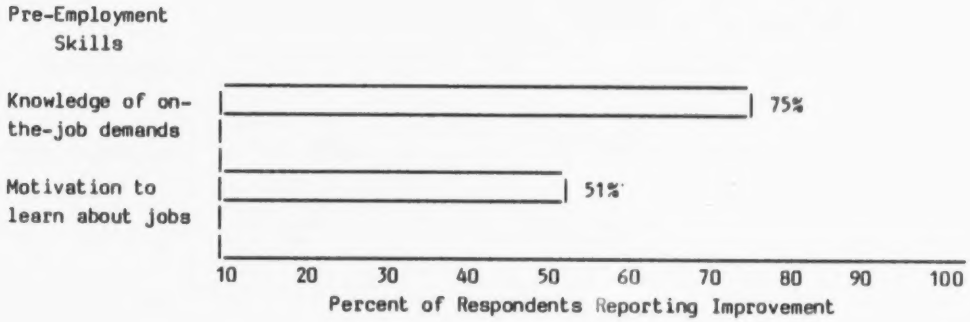


Figure 21

Percentage of Employers Observing Improvement in Students' Pre-Employment Skill Development



In addition to the ratings, open-ended comments from respondents highlighted many significant changes in students' pre-employment work competencies as a result of AVE participation. Employers, staff, parents, and students alike, said that AVE enabled participants to gain a better understanding of the world of work, to become more serious about career planning, and to better understand the basic steps required in searching for a job, including interviewing and self-presentation skills. Specific comments of the respondents are found below, organized according to career planning and job seeking skills clusters.

Comments About AVE's Impact on Student Pre-Employment Skills

Career Planning and Decision Making

There were significant changes in many of the participants...One young woman comes to mind. When I first met with her, she appeared scared and unintelligent...She now has a better sense of where she's going with her life...AVE helped her to realize her potential...it will help her in making some important decisions in her life. She still has a long way to go, but I believe that this past summer has helped her to clarify many things concerning education, personal skills, and future career goals.

(Counselor, Tompkins County)

One participant's interest in becoming a doctor stems from a personal family illness. The AVE program gave her an opportunity to explore the area of nephrology more extensively. Her concerns and need for understanding have developed in research, written and oral communication skill areas. A definite "most likely to succeed" participant.

(Teacher, EOC-Nassau County)

(My daughter) shows more motivation in planning for her career. Has a better understanding of the business working world. Understands the value of making and receiving a salary.

(Parent, National Council of Negro Women)

The biggest change in my child is that she has more realistic goals, goals that can be reached by her striving for them. Before she had no concrete goals or ideas of where she wanted to be or do in six months to five years from now. Now she does after going to the AVE program.

(Parent, Elmira Neighborhood Houses)

> Well, I learned all the qualifications and requirements I need for my career choice. AVE showed me what I have to do to reach my goals in life.
>
> (Student, Sports Foundation)

> AVE taught me to be prepared for a job and to take responsibility for myself. It also helped me to make a decision.
>
> (Student, Latimer-Woods)

Job Seeking Skills

> He knows more about job interviews and resume writing.
>
> (Parent, Vannguard)

> She now has more information on how to get a job.
>
> (Parent, Southeast Bronx)

> I learned how to plan, prepare and get all the things you need for a job interview, and also how to get the job too.
>
> (Student, Education Assistance of Long Island)

> I learned how to write a resume and a business letter. I also learned how to read the Want Ads.
>
> (Student, Harlem Council)

Overall, then, the findings related to pre-employment skill development were very positive. Students exhibited statistically significant growth in career planning/decision making skills and in job search skills following their exposure to AVE activities. Gains were impressive for the program, as a whole, as well as for many individual sites. Reactions of AVE staff, parents, and participants, supported the standardized test results. The vast majority of these respondents agreed that, after the AVE experience, participants were more realistic about career goals, more motivated to look for a job, and more knowledgeable about specific job seeking techniques, such as writing a resume, filling out a job application, and preparing for an interview. Employers also felt that AVE work exploration activities resulted in students' increased motivation and knowledge about the labor market. Based on these findings we can safely say that AVE was effective in increasing students' pre-employment skills.

3. Student Gains in Work Maturity

Research indicates that the most crucial factor in maintaining employment and functioning effectively on the job is the willingness to adhere to the expectations of the workplace. Appropriate work maturity behaviors include; 1) work fairness, or the ability to engage with others regardless of sex and racial/ethnic background; 2) teamwork, or functioning cooperatively with teachers, friends, and work colleagues; and 3) job dependability, or the willingness to conform to work norms, such as regular attendance, punctuality, and proper attire/grooming. The AVE program sought to promote appropriate work maturity skills through a variety of instructional activities. For example, curricular materials and discussions focused upon improving students' work fair attitudes with regard to race and sex. Counseling and other instructional activities emphasized life skills, such as understanding the rewards of work, dealing effectively with authority, getting along with friends and work colleagues, developing a more positive self-concept, and demonstrating good work habits. In short, the learning activities were designed to help students develop the necessary attitudes and behaviors for successful adjustment at work. Were these activities effective? To answer this question, we examined student attitudinal changes on the Work Attitude Survey, surveyed staff, employers, parents, and students about perceived improvement in attitudes towards work, self, and others, and reviewed student enrollment and attendance records.

Work Attitude Survey (WAS) Results

The WAS measured the following work maturity clusters: attitudes towards sex-role and ethnic arrangements, sex and racial/ethnic stereotyping, and perceptions of the differential treatment of the sexes in the social system. Pretest to posttest growth in these areas could be taken to mean that students improved their work fairness attitudes as a result of AVE participation.

Initial Need

The pretest scores on the WAS, for the total population, suggests that participants were relatively unbiased when they first began the AVE program. Nearly 80% of the students obtained an entry score of 22 or above which means that they could correctly answer more than three-quarters of the test items at pretest time (note the maximum score on the WAS is 30). The average score was 24.87, and the range of scores across project sites was 19.09 to 27.56. These data were consistent with previous evaluation findings.

WAS Gains

Despite the fairly high entry level scores on the WAS, AVE students still made statistically significant gains in work fairness attitudes as a result of the summer program (see Table 11). These findings are remarkable from two standpoints. First, attitudinal change is difficult enough to achieve in a full-year school program, let alone a program with an eight-week duration. Second, previous studies with control groups have shown that students typically experience a loss in work fair attitudes over the summer months. That AVE was able to effectively increase work fairness postures among students is quite an achievement.

Table 11

GAINS ON THE WORK ATTITUDE SURVEY FOR TOTAL POPULATION

Number of Students	Pretest Average	Posttest Average	Gain	t
991	24.91	26.10	1.18	9.15*

*Statistically significant (p<.01)

In addition to the total group results, WAS results were examined for each of the project sites. The results appear in Table 12 and Figure 22. According to both displays, all but two sites—92%—demonstrated raw score gains from pretest to posttest. More importantly, 63% of the sites evidenced statistically significant gains; the majority of these sites were newer projects.

Table 12

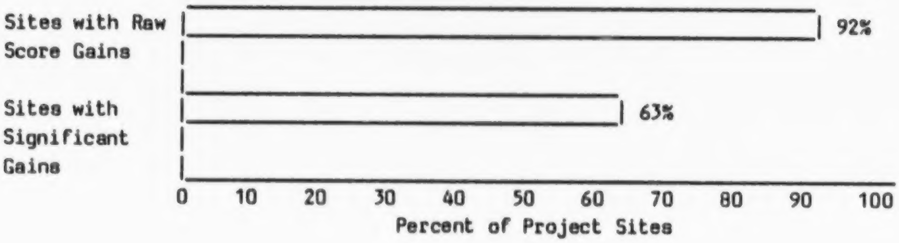
STUDENT GAINS ON THE WORK ATTITUDE SURVEY BY PROJECT SITE

		Average				Improvement
Project Site	N	Pre	Post	Gain	t	
Bronx Center for Progressive Services, Inc.	48	25.85	24.54	-1.31	-1.98	No
Brownsville Neighborhood Action Center #1	50	24.64	25.90	1.26	2.95	Yes*
Buffalo Urban League, Inc.	55	24.30	24.89	.59	.92	Yes
Chinatown Planning Council, Inc.	48	25.83	26.72	.89	2.29	Yes*
Colony South Brooklyn Houses, Inc.	37	25.62	26.91	1.29	1.99	Yes*
Economic Opportunity Commission of Nassau County	25	25.16	25.24	.08	.09	Yes
EDAD, Inc.	48	26.14	26.85	.71	1.88	Yes*
Education Assistance Center of Long Island	30	22.13	25.03	2.90	2.20	Yes*
Elmcor Youth and Adult Activities, Inc.	40	24.80	27.50	2.70	4.40	Yes*
Elmira Neighborhood Houses, Inc.	49	24.85	24.06	-.79	-1.27	No
Harlem Council for Church and Community Change	44	23.86	26.97	3.11	4.71	Yes*
Latimer-Woods Economic Development Association, Inc.	39	25.20	27.84	2.647	5.24	Yes*
National Council of Negro Women of Greater New York, Inc.	44	27.56	28.27	.71	2.28	Yes*
National Society for Hebrew Day Schools	41	19.09	23.51	4.42	6.35	Yes*
Rockland Community Action Council, Inc.	43	24.53	26.13	1.60	2.59	Yes*
Southeast Bronx Neighborhood Center, Inc.	41	24.04	25.07	1.03	1.37	Yes
Southern Queens Park Association, Inc.	42	24.85	26.42	1.57	4.09	Yes*
Sports Foundation, Inc.	43	26.16	27.76	1.60	3.17	Yes*
Tompkins County Job Training Program	17	26.58	27.23	.65	1.28	Yes
Urban League of Albany, Inc.	32	24.21	25.50	1.29	2.19	Yes*
Urban League of Onondaga County, Inc.	42	24.64	25.16	.52	1.20	Yes
Urban League of Rochester, Inc.	46	25.26	25.63	.37	.44	Yes
Vannguard Urban Improvement Association, Inc.	42	25.02	25.69	1.33	2.43	Yes*
Yonkers Community Action Program, Inc.	45	26.55	26.97	.42	1.18	Yes

*Statistically Significant ($p<.05$)

Figure 22

Percentage of AVE Project Sites Showing Gains on the Work Attitude Survey



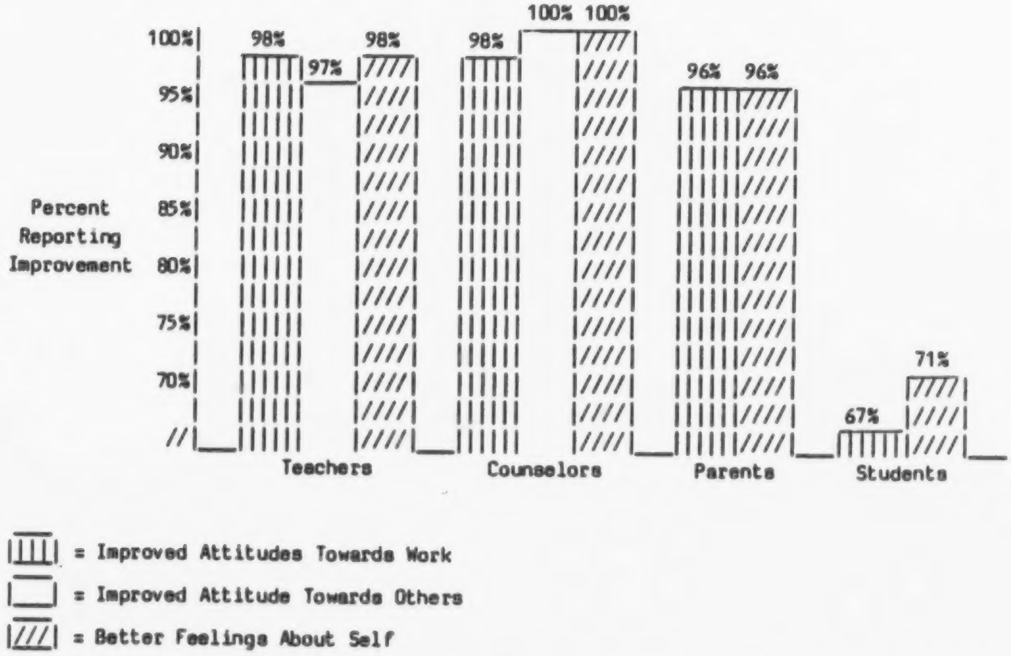
These results, thus, provide persuasive evidence that program participants improved their work fairness attitudes as a result of AVE. Considering that students typically show a loss in work fairness during the summer, these are important findings.

Perceived Changes in Attitudes Toward Work, Others, and Self

AVE staff, employers, parents, and program participants were surveyed to determine their perceptions of student growth in the following work areas: attitudes towards the world of work, attitudes towards others, including peers and work colleagues, and attitudes towards self. Staff, parent, and student ratings are shown in Figure 23. As this graph illustrates, practically all of the AVE staff members and 96% of the parents observed positive student growth in all areas assessed. While student ratings were not as high, the figures were nonetheless encouraging, with two-thirds of the students experiencing improved attitudes towards work, and 71% saying that they felt better about themselves as a result of AVE.

Figure 23

Percentage of Staff, Parents, and Students Who Felt that Participants Increased their Work Maturity as a Result of AVE

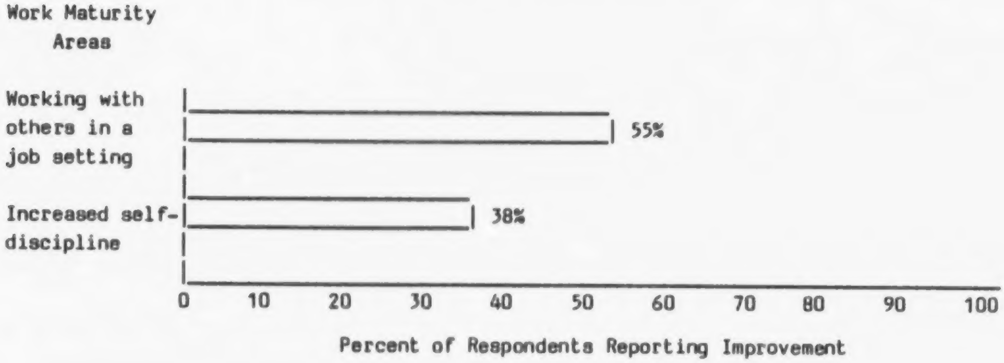


NOTE: The item, "Attitude Towards Others" was not included on the Parent and Student Surveys.

Employer perceptions were equally favorable. According to Figure 24, over half of the employers (55%) observed that students learned more about "working with others in a job setting" because of work site experiences. Additionally, 38% of the employers felt that work placement enabled students to improve their self-discipline.

Figure 24

Percentage of Employers Observing Improvement in Students' Work Maturity



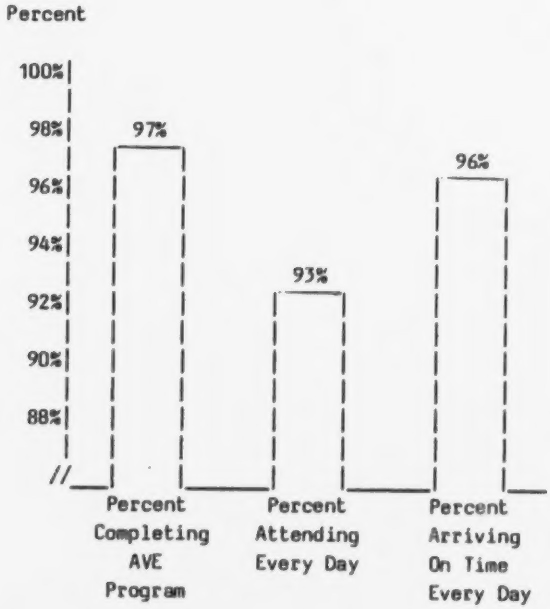
The positive ratings from all groups suggest that AVE played a major role in helping students develop many important work maturity attitudes and behaviors.

Job Dependability

Another critical aspect of work maturity relates to job dependability. Behaviors such as consistent daily attendance and punctuality are key to successful employment adjustment. These behaviors were examined in AVE participants through a review of student enrollment and attendance records, as well as lateness reports. The results of this review were extremely favorable. As Figure 25 depicts, 97% of the students who originally entered the AVE program were still enrolled at the end of the eight-week summer session. This means that only 3% of the students dropped out of AVE, an extraordinary finding considering that the AVE population includes youth who are so vulnerable to leaving school before graduation. The average attendance rate for AVE participants also was very high—92% of the students attended the program every day. Finally, an average of 96% of the students arrived "on time" in any given day. These findings, thus, demonstrate that AVE motivated students both to regularly attend and to remain in the program. Students' willingness to meet the program's expectations of consistent attendance and punctuality, is an encouraging sign for future work-related behaviors in this "at risk" population.

Figure 25

Enrollment and Attendance Patterns of AVE Participants



In summary, the work maturity results showed that AVE had a decided impact upon students' ability to conform to the expectations of the workplace. Work fairness attitudes improved because of AVE, as did students' attitudes towards others and their feelings about themselves. Also, there was evidence of improved responsibility and job dependability in these young people. Open-ended comments from survey respondents offer additional evidence of increased work maturity. An examination of responses (see below) revealed many instances of "uncooperative," "unmotivated," "hostile," and "insolent" students who, by the end of the program, began to take responsibility for their behaviors and show an overall improved attitude towards work, school, and others. The quiet and withdrawn youth also "opened up and formed solid relationships" with their peers and staff. Finally, youth who habitually cut classes in school or were "always late," became concerned about AVE attendance and punctuality. These are significant changes that hold great promise for future employment adjustment and on-the-job success.

Comments About AVE's Impact on Students' Work Maturity

> There was a male participant who was very disruptive. He was constantly trying to get some attention from his peers. After a few weeks of group and individual sessions, he started showing signs that he was learning how to channel his disruptions with meaningful participation in the group.
>
> (Teacher, Brownsville Neighborhood Action Center)

> Initial behavior showed a negative attitude towards both school and work. Had no clear view of a career path, and found everything "boring." As the program progressed, an increase was shown in her career decision making skills and overall attitude towards peers and authority.
>
> (Teacher, Elmira Neighborhood Houses)

> I had a street wise student who thought education was not important. They were making money illegally in the street. By the end of the 5th week they finally realized that illegal money could result in a jail sentence. They could get an education and make regular money each week with a guarantee by having a job.
>
> (Teacher, Buffalo Urban League)

> Participants initially stayed in ethnic groups, but later began to become more involved with other participants from different ethnic backgrounds.
>
> (Teacher, Chinatown Planning Council)

> The biggest change is that he wants to work; knows the value of money. He cares more about the way he looks.
>
> (Parent, Urban League of Onondaga)

> He assumed more responsibility in the home, e.g., doing household chores, helped in disciplining his three younger sisters. Takes more time in working on projects, more studious, became very careful about money.
>
> (Parent, Urban League of Rochester)

> Her overall attitude towards school and work has improved. She is more determined to succeed.
>
> (Parent, Bronx Center for Progressive Services)

To be honest, this AVE program has taught him to be on time wherever he has to go.

(Parent, EOC--Nassau County)

He doesn't want to be late for work. He was always late for school.

(Parent, Vannguard)

Being in the AVE program made me feel good about myself.

(Student, National Society for Hebrew Day Schools)

I've learned to have more respect for people because, to tell the truth, I didn't care about nothing in life before. I had a "I don't care attitude," about everything and everybody because I never knew how hard life would really be without my mother. Now I'm just learning and, believe me, it's not easy. I've learned how to meet new people and I learned how to say "thank you" for a change.

(Student, Southern Queens Park Association)

I learned to have responsibility for myself.

(Student, Rockland Community Action Center)

4. Student Attainment of Academic Credit

Student attainment of academic credit is one of the most important benefits of AVE participation. Every year, all AVE projects are rigorously evaluated by the New York State Education Department (SED) to determine whether they meet the standards of quality equal to that of an elective course in secondary schools. If projects are approved for credit, the SED recommends to school administrators that successful AVE completers receive elective credit for their accomplishments that may be applied to high school diploma requirements.

Credit awards contribute to student motivation and interest in several ways. First, the student is aware that s/he has attended a quality program that has met academic standards at the secondary level. This knowledge alone can give the student self-confidence to return to school and achieve in a traditional learning environment. Second, credit awards can strengthen a young person's commitment to traditional education by helping them to make progress toward receiving a high school diploma. Finally, the credit evaluation can enhance year-round services to "at risk" youth by linking schools with community organizations that serve the same youth. The academic credit process, thus, is a significant component of Project AVE.

The specific evaluation procedures[3] used in awarding academic credit are described in the paragraphs below. Following this discussion we present the 1985 academic credit results.

Criteria for Selecting AVE Training Programs for Evaluation

AVE programs which operated on a formal and regular basis and with official approval of the project site were considered for evaluation; individual students could not submit their training programs directly to the SED for evaluation. To be eligible for evaluation, AVE programs had to satisfy the following criteria:

1. The program included at least 126 clock hours of instruction at the secondary level.
2. An appropriate assessment mechanism (such as tests, projects, oral quizzes, hands-on performance, problem solving, etc.) was used to evaluate students' performance. This important requirement assured secondary school officials that the students mastered the material covered and could progress to more advanced course work.
3. Staff were selected on the basis of their experience and education to ensure that they were qualified to teach the subject matter.
4. The project site maintained official records of students' participation and performance in the AVE program. The project site demonstrated the capability to store and retrieve student records for the period covered by the credit recommendations and to send copies of official student records to schools upon request.

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[3] This section is taken, with minor editorial changes, from New York State Adolescent Vocational Exploration Program: 1983 Academic Credit Handbook. Prepared by Lisa Ventura Bryant with Deborah Hosley Cunningham. Albany, New York: The University of the State of New York, The State Education Department. September, 1983.

Steps in the Evaluation Process

The AVE programs were selected for evaluation after consultation between project site and/or their contracting agencies and staff of the State Education Department's Division of Child Development, Parent Education and Pupil Support Services.

Before an evaluation could occur, each project site submitted a completed "Request for Academic Credit Evaluation" to the Department. These forms requested general information on the organization's education and training activities and specific information on the AVE program. Each project also submitted a list of participant requirements for the AVE program. Department staff used the completed forms to determine whether or not a program was eligible for evaluation based on criteria outlined in the guidelines.

Staff members from the State Education Department's Division of Child Development, Parent Education and Pupil Support Services selected the members of the 1985 AVE evaluation teams and scheduled evaluation dates for eligible programs. Teams were comprised of one person from school faculties or related nonacademic organizations, and one staff member from the State Education Department. Evaluators were selected on the basis of their knowledge of the subject areas taught in the AVE programs and their familiarity with alternative educational programs.

Prior to each evaluation session, members of the evaluation team were sent copies of the completed Request for Academic Credit Evaluation Form, and other background material to prepare them for the evaluation process.

The evaluation teams conducted full-day, on-site reviews of each project during a ten-day period in mid-August, which allowed evaluators to review all projects at the same general stage of operation.

The actual evaluation sessions began with a brief orientation for the evaluation team by a staff member from the Division of Child Development, Parent Education and Pupil Support Services. A representative of the project site then presented a concise overview of the site's AVE program, the administration of the AVE program procedure for course development and revision, the process by which individuals were chosen to participate in the AVE program, and the criteria and procedures by which the program instructors were selected and their performance subsequently reviewed.

During the evaluation visit, team members also observed classroom activities, and reviewed instructional materials, class plans, and student folders. Each project was requested to provide the evaluation team, on the day of its visit, with the following written information about their AVE program:

a) Four copies of a detailed syllabus of the AVE program describing the topics covered, the depth in which they are covered, the amount of time devoted to each, the instructional methods used, the required readings and other outside assignments, the schedule of examinations, and other pertinent information.

b) One set of the instructional materials used, such as textbooks, audiovisual materials, student handouts, and instructor's manual.

c) A description of the procedures used for measuring the performance of students, including specific methods or evaluation tools used and explanation of the grading procedures. It was essential that examples of the evaluation instruments (preferably ones which had been completed by students and graded by the instructors) were provided.

d) Examples of student files or student records.

e) A list of all students in their 1985 AVE program and the schools the students planned to attend in the fall.

The team reviewed these materials privately, guided by a checklist which assured the team reviewed all important aspects of the AVE program. The checklist was created specifically for the AVE evaluations by the State

Education Department. The project director and instructors were available throughout the day to answer questions which arose during the review.

After reviewing all materials, the evaluators identified program strengths and made specific recommendations for program improvement. Evaluators who found that an AVE program was not credit-worthy gave specific reasons for the decision and made suggestions for ways in which the program could be changed in order to receive a credit recommendation in the future.

At the conclusion of the AVE program, project sites submitted to the Academic Credit Evaluation staff information concerning which students passed or failed the program.

Results

The evaluators considered 23 of 24 1985 AVE projects to be credit-worthy at the secondary school level. The evaluation team summaries, from the list of program areas evaluated during team site visits, cited "staff members" as a program strength most frequently, followed in ranking order by the topics, student outcomes, learning environment/process, resource sites and student records. Over 900 students from these sites thus were eligible to receive one unit of credit at approximately 250 schools.

The project sites announced the credit recommendations to those students who had successfully completed the AVE program and explained to the students how they could use the recommendations to seek credit at their school.

5. Student and Parent Satisfaction

To a large extent, the effectiveness of any educational program can be judged by participant reactions. The level of satisfaction that participants experience with a project, their perceptions of project impact, and their overall endorsement of project activities are critical indicators of success.

The importance of participant feedback to program functioning led us to study how AVE was perceived by its "at risk" student population and their parents. Along these lines, we asked students several satisfaction questions including how they felt about their involvement in AVE, and if they would recommend the program to their friends. We also asked students about the particular areas of the curriculum that were most useful to them, and what they would have done over the summer if they had not participated in AVE. Similarly, parents were queried about their level of program satisfaction and their involvement in AVE activities. Results are discussed below.

Student Satisfaction

Overall, students favorably evaluated their experiences with Project AVE. According to Figure 26, 94% of the students felt that their involvement in the program was helpful or very helpful; only 6% viewed the project as "a waste of time." Program endorsement was demonstrated even further by responses to the question "Would you recommend Project AVE to your friends?" As displayed in Figure 27, 82% of the students felt that they would "probably" or "definitely" recommend the project to friends. Both of these results suggest that students were highly committed to AVE and viewed their involvement as personally worthwhile.

Figure 26

How would you rate your involvement in Project AVE?

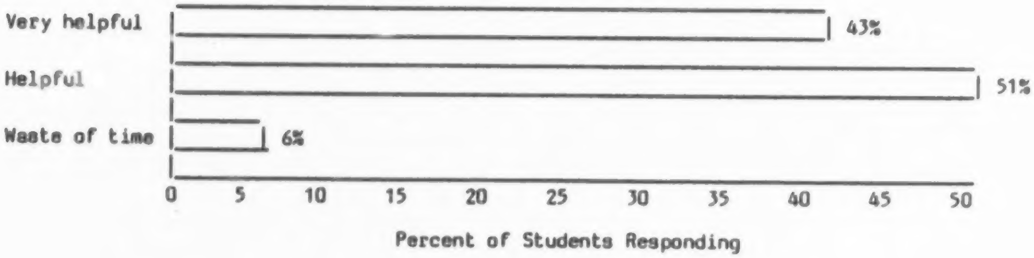
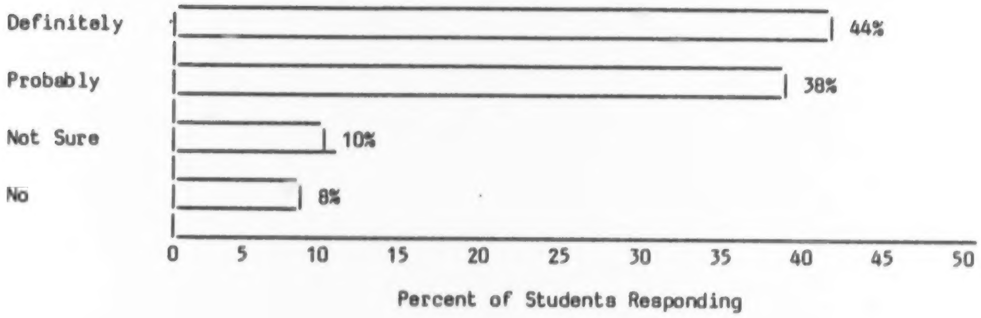


Figure 27

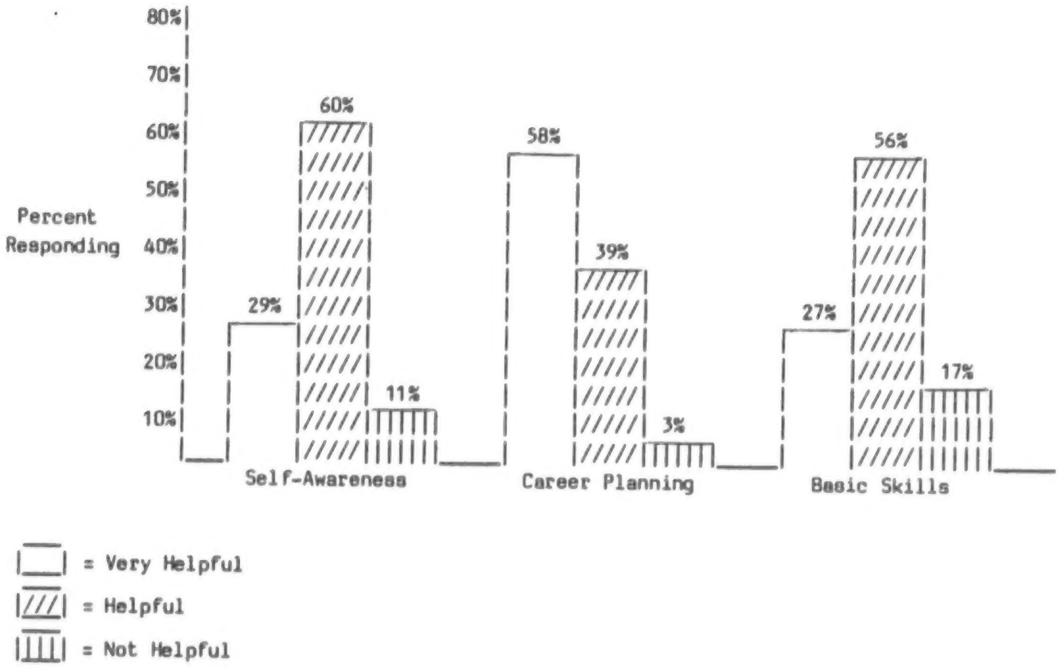
Would you recommend AVE to your friends?



The assessment of the AVE curriculum produced similarly positive results. By and large, students felt that the three major areas of instruction examined, i.e., self-awareness, career planning, and basic skills, were very useful. Students were particularly impressed with career planning activities—97% rated this curricular area as helpful or very helpful (see Figure 28). In addition, 89% of the students found self-awareness instruction to be helpful, and 83% expressed high satisfaction with basic skills activities. The basic skills ratings are significant considering that "at risk" students, such as those attending AVE, typically are "turned off" to traditional school subjects.

Figure 28

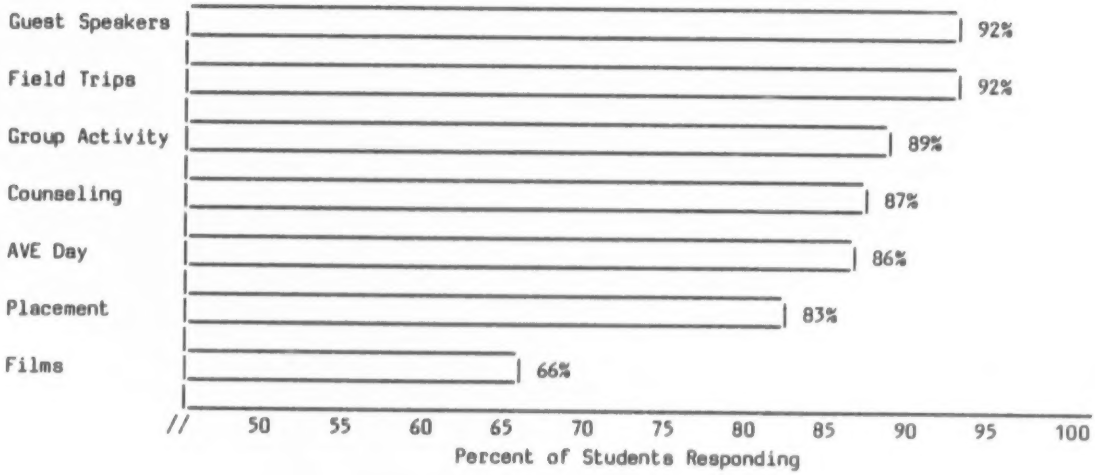
How helpful were AVE instructional activities?



In terms of the specific learning activities that were most beneficial, students gave the highest rating to "guest speakers" and "field trips." By contrast, "films and videotapes" received the lowest ratings (see Figure 29). These findings are consistent with those obtained in previous evaluations of AVE.

Figure 29

What instructional activities were the most helpful?



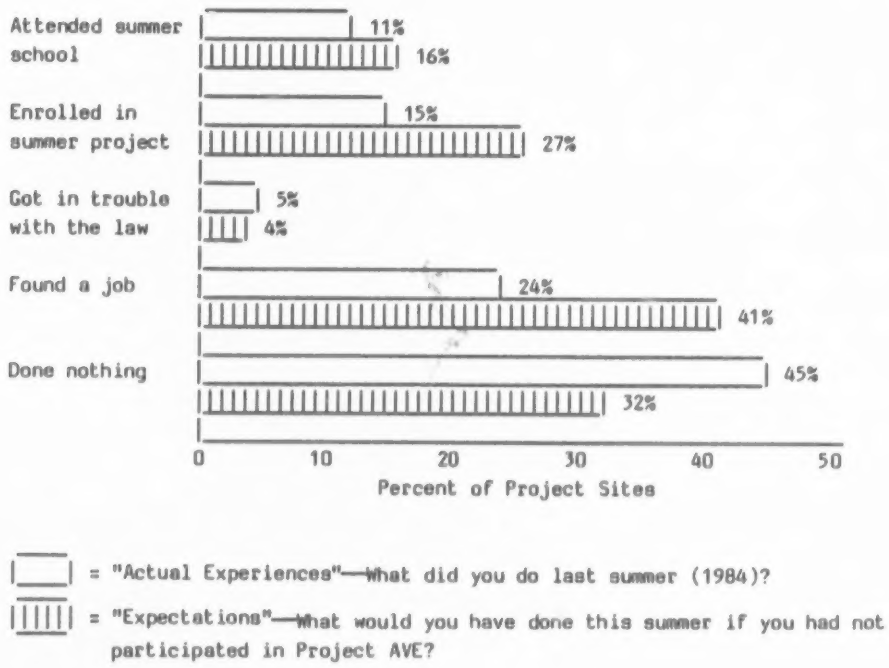
As a final consideration in the assessment of student satisfaction, we asked the following two questions:

> "What did you do last summer (1984)?" and
>
> "What would you have done this past summer had you not been involved in Project AVE?"

Several interesting results emerged from the analysis. Most noticeable was the difference between students' actual experiences in the summer of 1984, and their expectations for 1985. Specifically, students anticipated a much more optimistic summer than one would predict based on the 1984 experiences (see Figure 30). For example, 41% of the AVE students felt that they would have "gotten a job" this past summer had they not participated in AVE; however, in 1984, only one-quarter of the AVE students actually found a job, a figure that is more in line with the employment ratios generally observed among disadvantaged youth (refer to Figure 2 in the Introduction). Similarly, over 40% of the students felt that they would have attended summer school or another summer project if they had not been involved with AVE; last year only 26% of the students actually enrolled in summer school or other summer projects. In light of these rating differences and the real conditions of the labor market, it is probable that, without AVE, nearly one-half of the students would have been idle during the summer months. This is an alarming statistic in view of the research which shows that the lack of positive summer opportunities for disadvantaged youth has a direct relationship to delinquency and crime. Five percent (5%) of the AVE students, in fact, did get in trouble with the law in 1984, a percentage that could very well have been repeated this past year if it had not been for AVE. Thus, Project AVE offered its young population of students a summer of opportunity; moreover, for some students 1985 was a summer of renewed hope.

Figure 30

Percentage of AVE Students Responding to Questions About Their Summer Activities



In summary, student reactions to AVE were very positive. The vast majority found their involvement to be worthwhile and thought that their friends could benefit from program participation. AVE also appeared to provide students with a constructive learning opportunity that otherwise might not have been available. As one parent said, "AVE gave my son something to be interested in, it kept him off the streets and out of trouble."

Parent Satisfaction

The findings of parent commitment and support were equally positive. When parents were asked how they felt about their children's experiences in AVE, 97% said that they were satisfied or very satisfied (see Figure 31). More significantly, over 60% said that their children were much more motivated to learn in the AVE program as compared to regular school. According to one parent, "My son was more willing to be a part of AVE than regular school." These high ratings are strong indications of parents' overall confidence and belief in Project AVE (Figure 32).

Figure 31

How satisfied are you with your child's experiences in Project AVE?

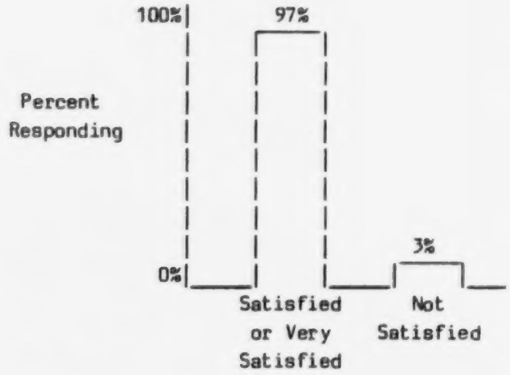
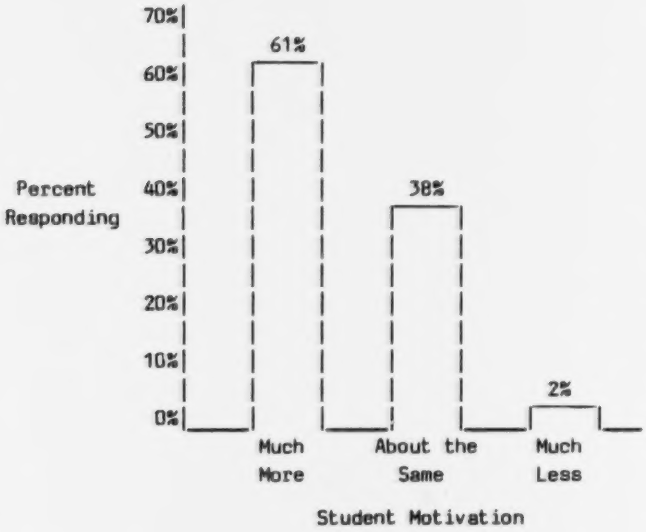


Figure 32

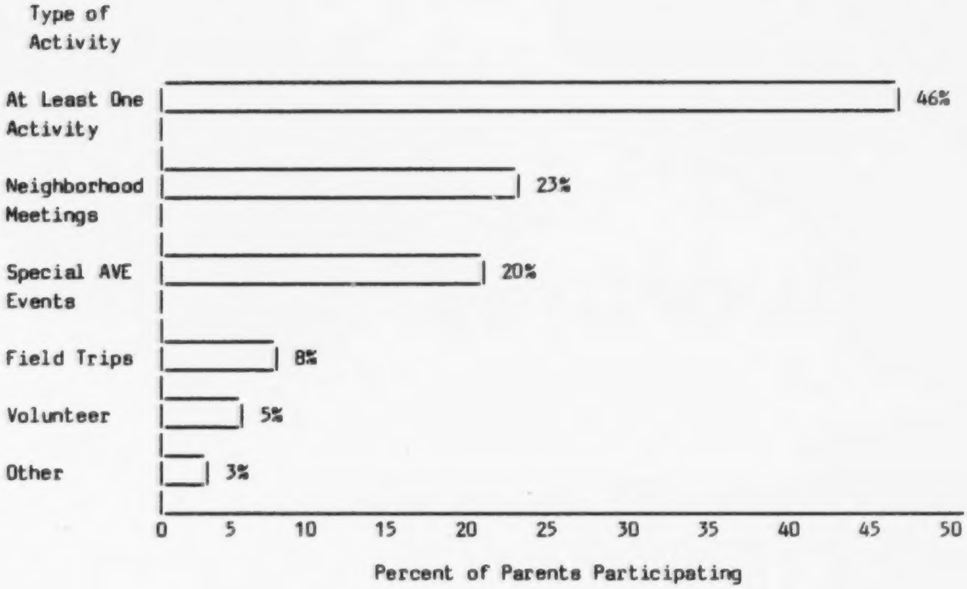
In comparison with regular school, how motivated is your son/daughter to learn in the AVE program?



Another indication of confidence and belief was the level of parent participation in AVE. According to Figure 33, 46% of the nearly 700 parents surveyed participated in at least one AVE activity during the summer. The activities included: neighborhood meetings, special events at the AVE site, field trips, or volunteer work. The findings are exceptional considering the level of parent participation typically found in inner-city schools; that more than 300 parents were involved in AVE activities certainly attests to genuine parental commitment and support for Project AVE.

Figure 33

Percentage Parents Who Participate in AVE Activities



Parent support was also evident in the open-ended comments provided on the Parent Questionnaires. Many parents favorably commented that they were "proud of my child's participation in AVE," and that "AVE helped my child learn about life." Several parents also were impressed with the AVE staff; as one parent remarked, "I would like to extend my appreciation to a great staff." Most importantly, parents were pleased with the changes that they observed in their children because of AVE. For example, "she used to be shy, she isn't anymore;" "she was lazy, AVE made her responsible;" "she believes in herself much more;" and, "AVE made my daughter more mature."

In sum, parents expressed solid commitment and support for the AVE program and demonstrated this support by participating in AVE activities. The level of parent endorsement suggests that AVE, indeed, was viewed as an extremely important resource for "at risk" students.

Impact Evaluation Summary

At the beginning of this chapter, we raised the following key question: "Did the AVE program make a significant impact upon students?" In view of the findings, the answer appears to be "YES" for the majority of AVE sites. The analysis of students' basic skills performance revealed that AVE participants significantly improved their reading and mathematics ability over the eight-week summer program, a time when disadvantaged youth generally experience a profound learning loss. Standardized test results of decision-making, job seeking skills, and work maturity also were very positive, with students exhibiting statistically significant growth in these important employability areas. In addition, staff, employers, parents and students felt that AVE produced major changes in students' attitudes and behaviors including improved self-image, ability to interact cooperatively with others, and overall responsibility.

Thus, the evidence suggests that AVE truly made an impact upon students by helping them to develop many important academic and career exploration skills. And, although no one program can be expected to completely solve the youth unemployment problem, AVE has done much to contribute to the solution. It has given young people a chance to compete in the labor market, a chance that they might otherwise not have had.

What Factors Contribute to Overall Program Success?

The impact findings revealed that the AVE program successfully increased the basic education, pre-employment and work maturity competencies of its participants. But how were these positive outcomes achieved? This critical question was addressed by studying the nature of the AVE intervention. In particular, the evaluation probed the type and extent of employer participation in the program, the design of the program with regard to staffing and internal management procedures, and the specific learning approach used by AVE to remediate students' pre-employment skill deficiencies. The results of this process assessment are presented below, organized according to three major topics: 1) Community and Private Sector Involvement; 2) Organizational Structure of the Project Sites; and 3) Program Services.

1. Community and Private Sector Involvement

Research suggests that the success of any youth training effort depends on the level of public and private sector involvement in the program. The opportunity for direct career exploration in a business, industrial or community setting enables young people to learn, firsthand, about a variety of potential occupations. In this way, students can accurately indentify the skills they need to succeed in an occupation, and thus begin to define their career goals more realistically.

An analysis of AVE resources information records revealed that active employer participation was integral to the AVE program. AVE staff systematically recruited an extensive bank of public and private agencies to provide simulated work experiences for students. This experience was obtained through apprenticeships, interviewing, job shadowing, and on-the-site training. In addition, representatives from these agencies served as guest speakers for the program, provided tours of the work site, and were available for interviews or other information needs of students. The exact nature and extent of employer involvement in Project AVE is discussed in the following paragraphs. We also report on the level of employer satisfaction with the AVE program.

Resource Development and Usage

According to Figure 34, the AVE project sites were able to recruit nearly 1,400 different employer resources during the 1985 summer program. The number of resources identified per site varied widely with some projects developing over 100 resources and others identifying 25 or less; the median number of resources identified was 48. Despite these site differences in recruitment, most projects were able to use 70% of all resources. In several cases moreover, there was a perfect match between the number of resources developed and those that subsequently were used by program participants.

In terms of the type of usage, nearly half of the employer resources served as career exploration job sites. This level of involvement provided 80% of the AVE students with simulated work experience in their primary interest area. A large number of employers also served in other capacities. Fifty percent (50%), for example, provided tours of the work site, and 36% served as guest speakers or made presentations at the local AVE sites (see Figure 35).

Figure 34

Total Number of Resources Developed and Used

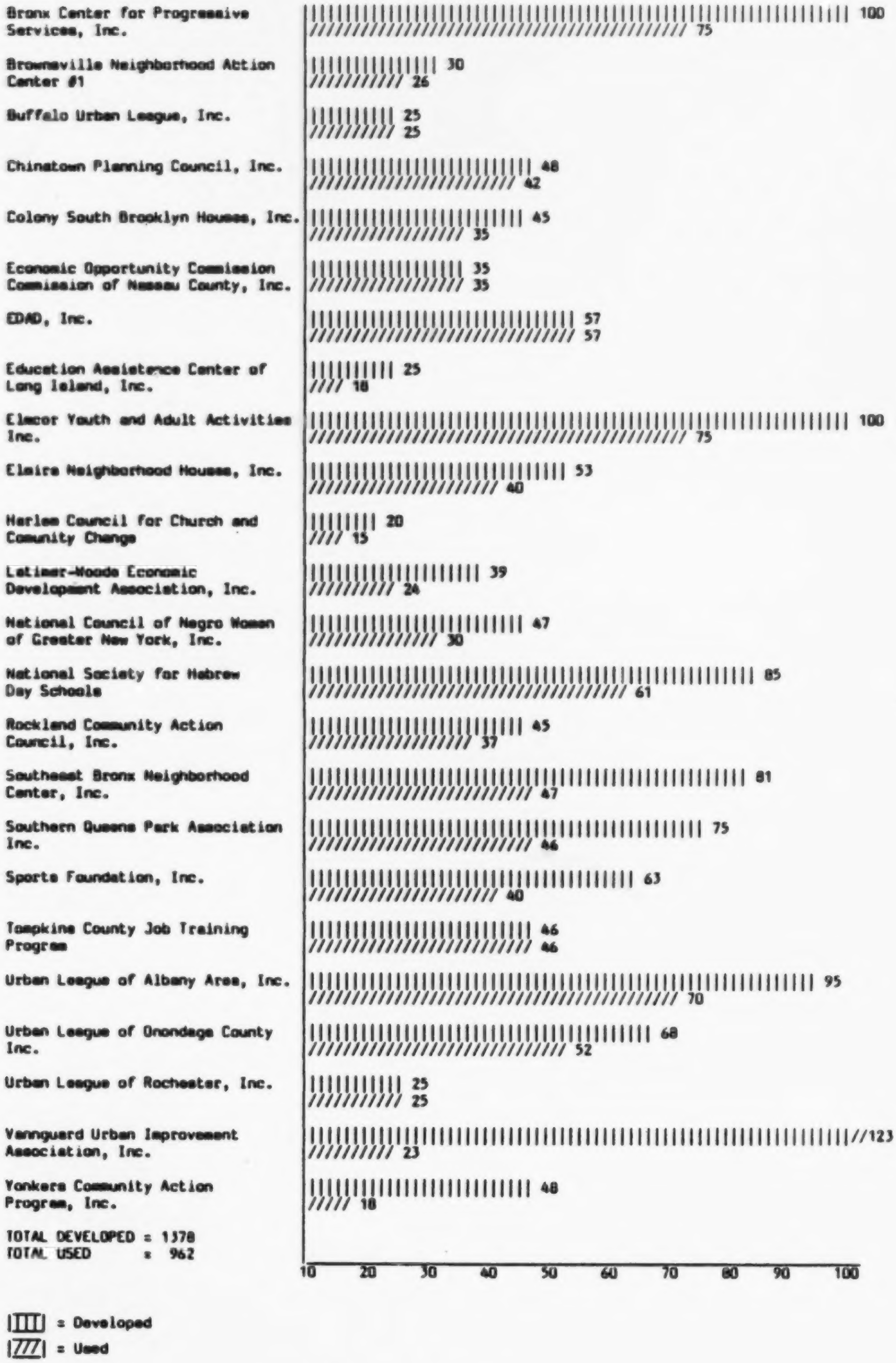


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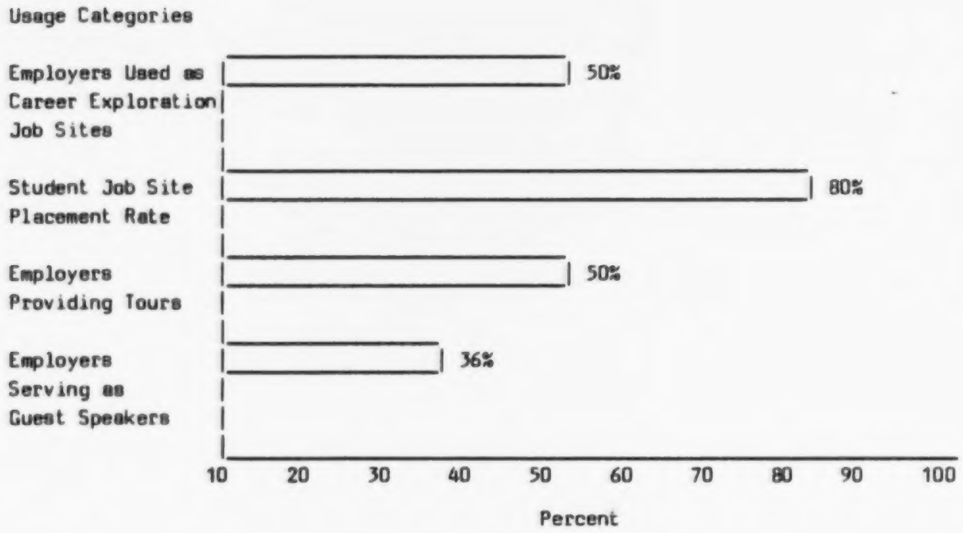
Figure 35

The Nature of Resource Usage in AVE*

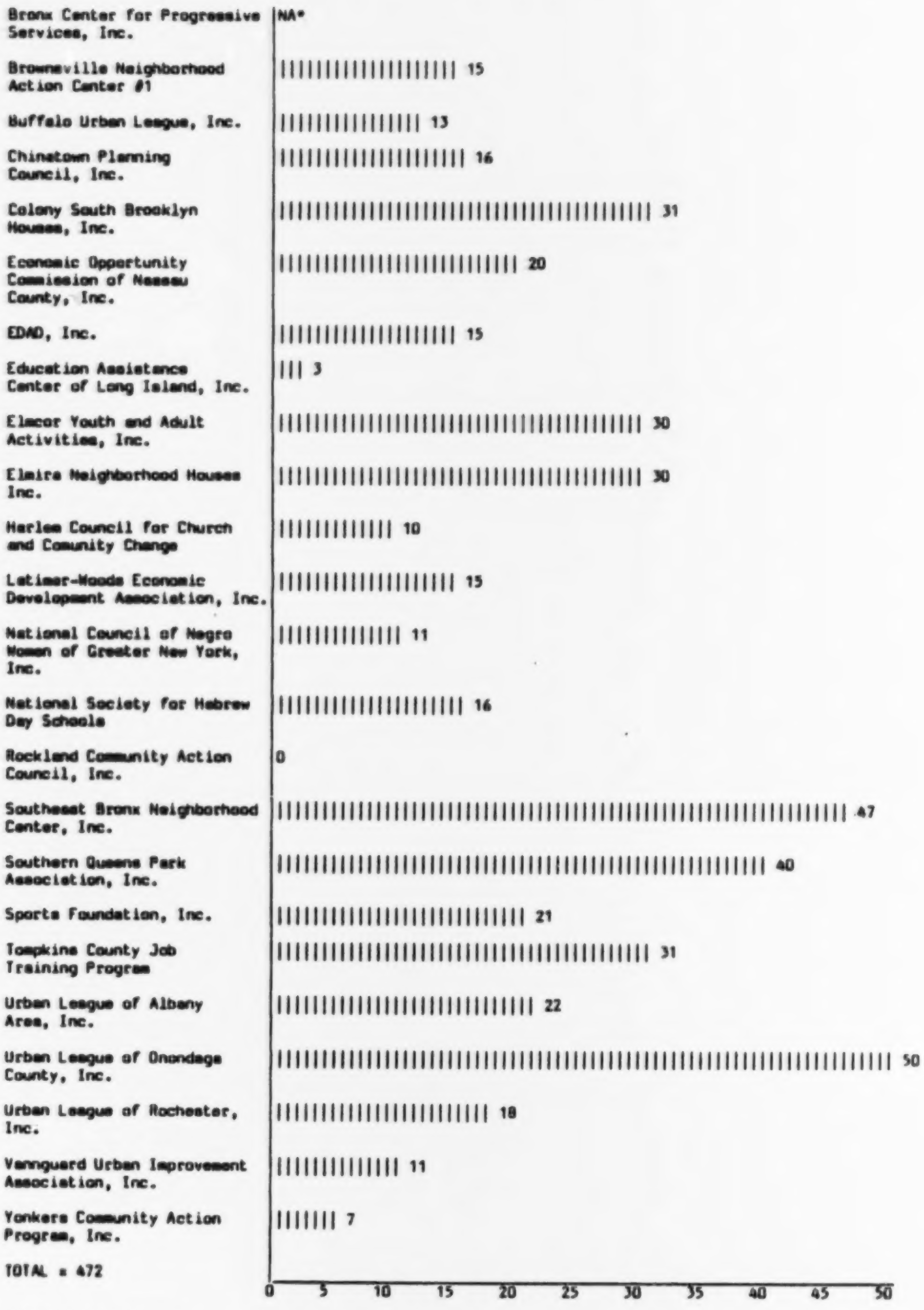


*The employers percentages are based on the number of employers used by AVE sites.

A site-by-site analysis of resource usage appears in Figures 36 through 38. As these figures demonstrate, there was much site variability in the data. Examination of Figure 36, "Resources Used for Placement," for instance, shows that some AVE projects involved nearly all of the employer resources in placement activities, while other projects used less than 20% for site placement. Because of this diversity, the number of students actually placed in a work setting also varied from site to site. In certain projects nearly all of the AVE participants had at least one placement during the summer, yet, in other projects, none of the students experienced career exploration placements (see Figure 37). Similar site differences were evident with speakers/presentations and tours, as Figure 38 demonstrates.

Figure 36

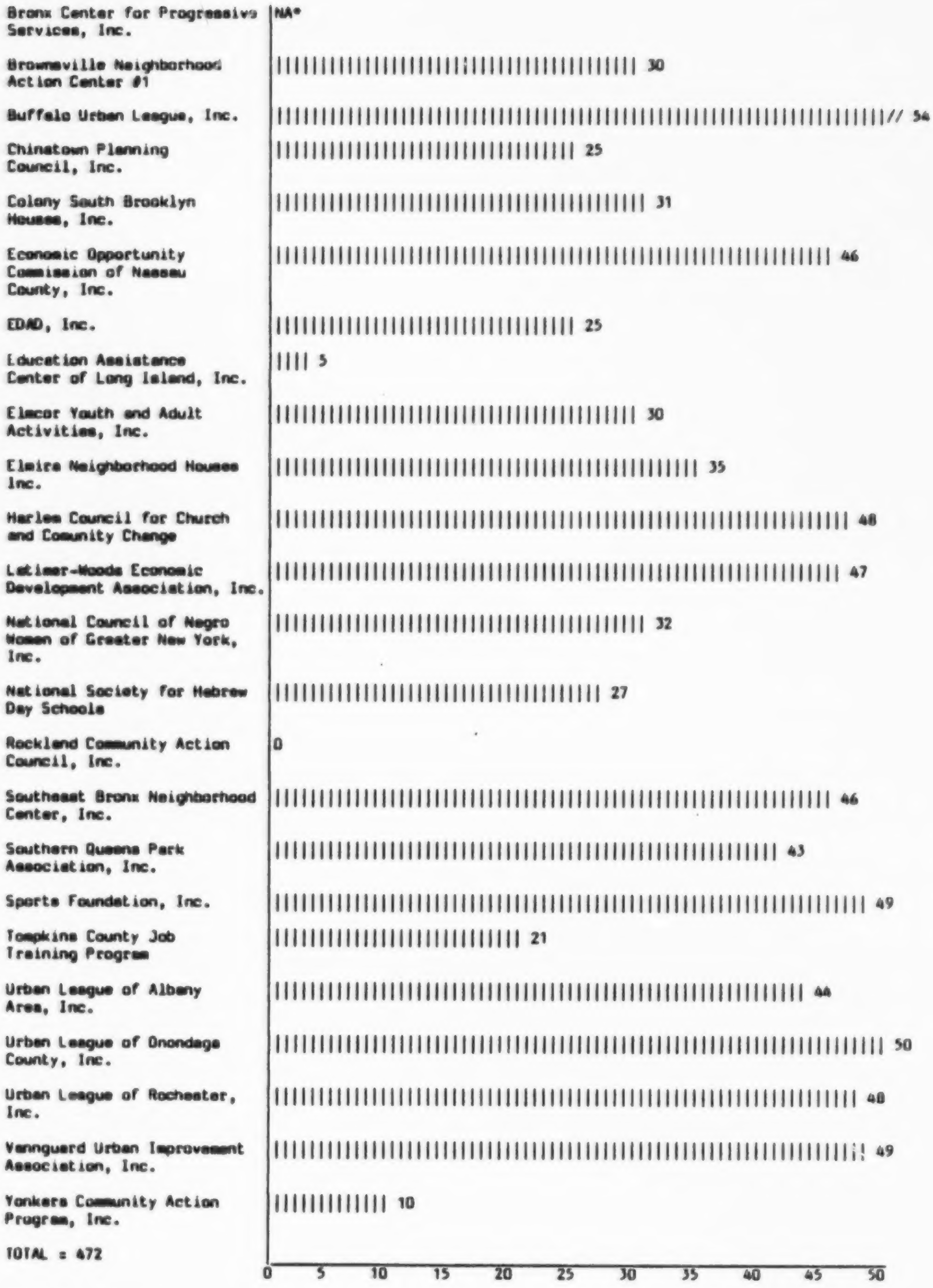
Resources Used for Placement



*NA=Not Available

Figure 37

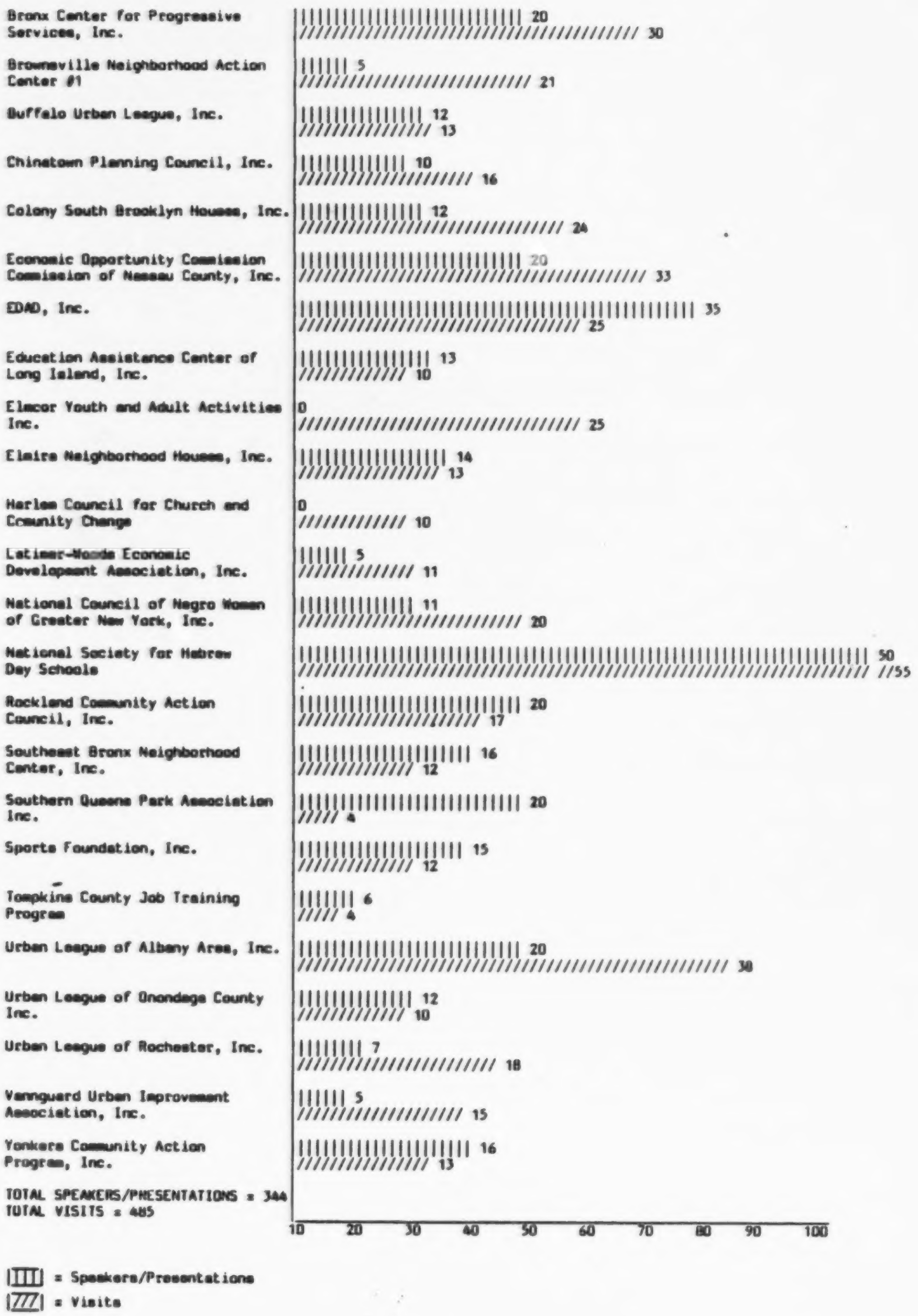
Total Number of Participant Placements



*NA=Not Available

Figure 38

Resources Used for Speakers/Presentations and Visits



In explaining these differences it is probable that student interests played a major role in determining the nature of resource usage. It is also likely that individual site philosophies strongly determined usage, as project staff had different opinions about the relative importance of various activities. For instance, some project staff felt that student placements were vital to the process of employability development. Others, however, believed that participants were better off being exposed to a wide variety of career options through group activities such as speakers, presentations, and site visits.

In summary, AVE staff were able to identify an impressive number of resources during the 1985 summer program. Seventy percent (70%) of the resources were subsequently used by AVE students, with nearly 500 or 50% involved as career exploration job sites. Through the placement activities, 80% of the students were provided with simulated work experience, an opportunity that the research links with future employment success.

Types of Resources Used

To determine the types of employer resources that were involved in the AVE program, participating agencies were asked to complete an Employer Questionnaire. The analysis of the responses revealed a number of interesting results. First, a wide range of agency types served as AVE resources, including government agencies, private businesses, and non-profit organizations (see Figure 39). Half of these agencies were small businesses with fewer than 25 workers. These employers, for the most part, were in service and retail industries, and generally operated in neighborhoods near the project sites. Larger organizations also were involved in career exploration job site activities. As Figure 40 shows, 12% of the participating agencies employed over 500 people; these generally were large industries operating in the cities.

Figure 39

Types of Resources Used by AVE Projects

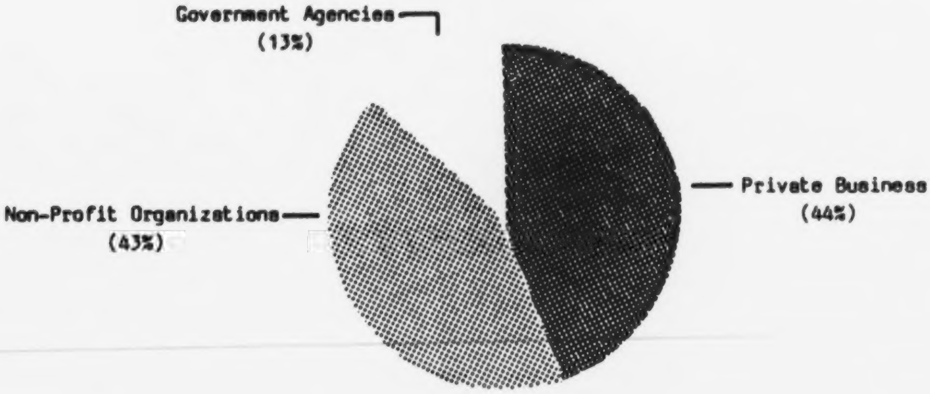
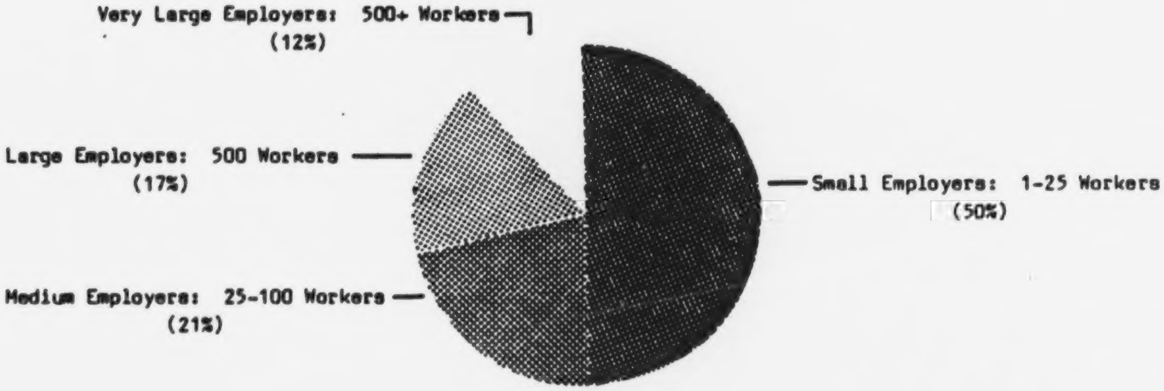


Figure 40

Size of Resources Used by AVE Projects



The diverse types of employer organizations enabled AVE participants to experience a range of occupational fields. The career areas most often targeted by the organizations included: computer and data processing, clerical/secretarial, health and hospital services, accounting/marketing, and the trades.

Thus, AVE participants were exposed to a variety of public and private agencies during their enrollment in the program. Agencies varied by type, size, and career focus, thereby affording students the opportunity to explore many different career options.

Employer/Community Agency Perceptions of Project AVE

As the above findings demonstrated, the nature and extent of public and private agency involvement in AVE was impressive. But even more noteworthy was the level of employer satisfaction with the program and its participants. Employer satisfaction was measured in several ways. First, agency personnel were directly asked how satisfied they were with their involvement in Project AVE. In response to this query, 98% indicated that they were satisfied or very satisfied with their participation (see Figure 41). Employers also were asked whether or not they would continue their involvement with the project for another year. According to Figure 43, 90% said that they most likely would continue to participate in AVE, and no agency indicated that participation was unlikely. These high ratings are solid indications of employers' endorsement of the AVE program.

Figure 41

How satisfied are you with your agency's involvement in Project AVE?

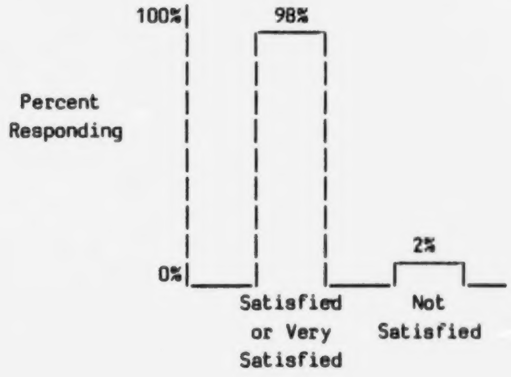
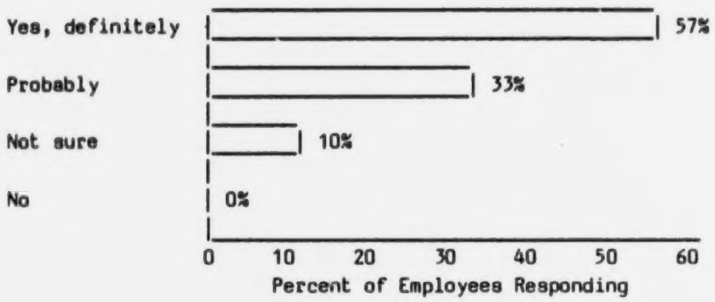


Figure 42

Will your agency participate in the AVE program next year?



Support for AVE also was evident in employers' responses to the following questions:

Did the behavior of students present any problems for your organization?

Were the students effectively supervised?

What particular aspects of the program were you most pleased with? (Open-Ended)

As Figure 43 demonstrates, 93% of the employers said that there were no disciplinary problems; a slight improvement over last year. Similarly, a 1% improvement was observed regarding student supervision; 99% of the employers indicated that students were effectively supervised (see Figure 44).

Figure 43

Did the behavior of participants present any problems for your organization?

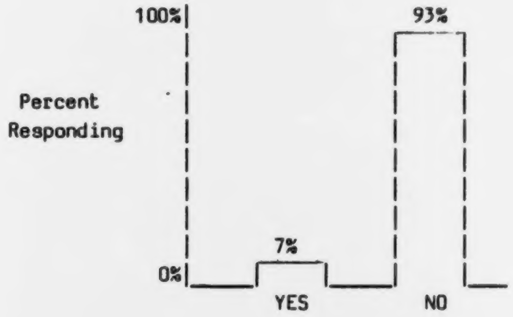
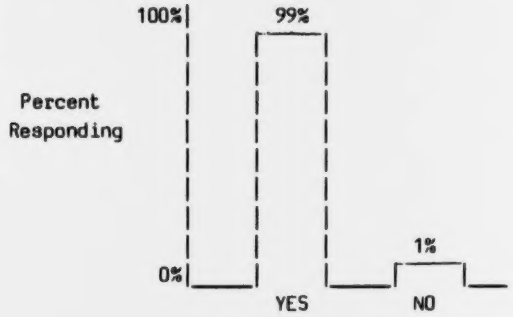


Figure 44

Were the participants effectively supervised?



Responses to the open-ended survey items were equally favorable. Areas of the program with which employers were most pleased included the following: students' enthusiasm and discipline, students' responsibility and work maturity, and students' overall willingness to learn new things. Employers also felt that certain areas of program operation could be improved. In particular, several agencies desired more information about students' needs well in advance of program start-up so that they could better direct work-exploration activities.

In summary, employers were extremely satisfied with the AVE program and with program participants. Agencies felt that students were well behaved, and effectively supervised by project staff. Agency endorsement was further demonstrated by the large number of employers—90%—who indicated that they would participate in AVE for another year.

2. Organizational Structure of Project Sites

As we have discussed, the fundamental measure of success for a youth training program, such as AVE, rests in its ability to provide students with the awareness and knowledge needed to increase their future job and career opportunities. Knowledge development, however, does not occur in a vacuum; it is influenced by a number of programmatic factors that can augment or diminish the chances for ultimate success. Among the factors that strongly affect a project's ability to produce effective and lasting student change are the organizational environment in which learning takes place, and the commitment and responsiveness of the project staff. These factors were closely examined in the current evaluation study. The pertinent findings are presented in the following paragraphs.

Learning Environment

One of the major strengths of the AVE program was the positive learning climate that was readily apparent in the staffing structure, the management procedures, and the degree of staff cohesiveness. Regarding the staffing structure, each project site employed a project director, two career educators, counselors and aides, a field placement coordinator, and two support members. The professional staff were organized into two teams, with each team having direct responsibility for a group of 25 students. The roles of the team members were clearly defined so that all staff had a common understanding of specific job functions.

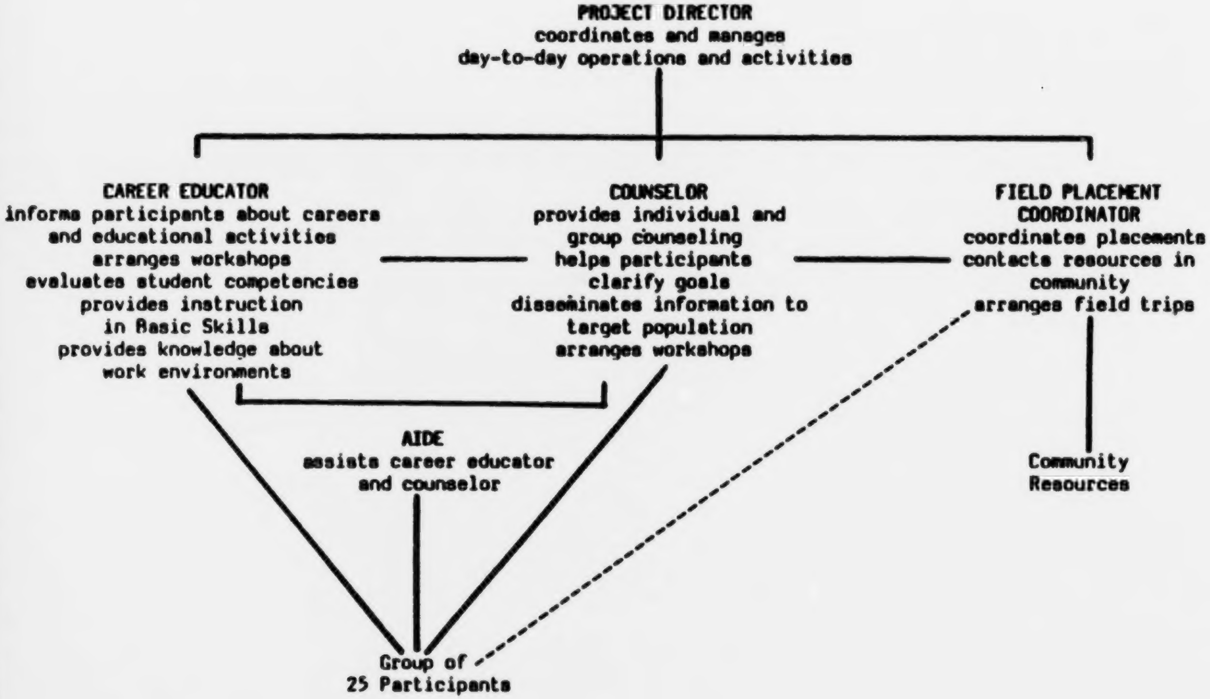
Figure 45 illustrates the staffing arrangement typically implemented by project sites. As shown, project directors were primarily responsible for the day-to-day management of the site, while each career educator, counselor, and aide formed the core instructional team that worked directly with students. The field placement coordinator assisted core team members in employer resource development, but had less direct contact with students. Through this staffing arrangement, project sites were able to achieve a student to staff ratio of approximately 7:1. This favorable ratio enabled staff to individualize instruction and, thus, serve youth at varying levels of maturity and ability. Appendix A offers a more detailed description of the specific roles and responsibilities of project staff members.

The AVE program also was characterized by sound leadership and management. AVE project directors administered their sites in a way that encouraged staff autonomy in the classroom and active staff involvement in decision-making. In addition, directors and staff regularly communicated with each other through formal and informal group meetings, individual discussions, and written memos. This ongoing interaction, coupled with the staff-directed learning, greatly contributed to the effective functioning of the program.

Another indicator of positive learning climate was the high degree of staff cohesiveness. As Figure 46 illustrates, nearly all staff members felt that the 1985 AVE staff worked together as an integrated team in providing services to students. The clarity of staff roles and responsibilities,

Figure 45

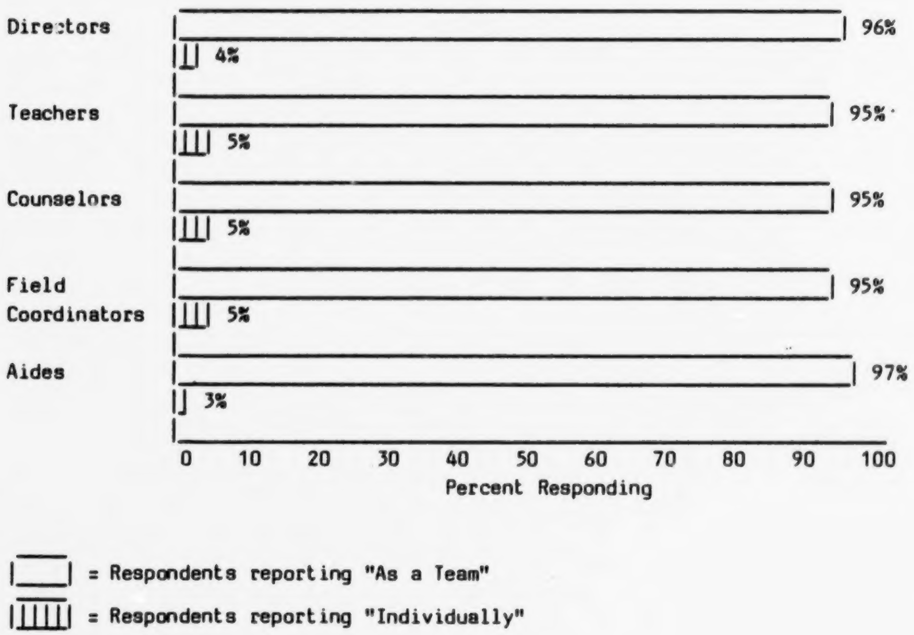
Project Staff


PROJECT DIRECTOR
coordinates and manages
day-to-day operations and activities
CAREER EDUCATOR
informs participants about careers
and educational activities
arranges workshops
evaluates student competencies
provides instruction
in Basic Skills
provides knowledge about
work environments
COUNSELOR
provides individual and
group counseling
helps participants
clarify goals
disseminates information to
target population
arranges workshops
FIELD PLACEMENT
COORDINATOR
coordinates placements
contacts resources in
community
arranges field trips
AIDE
assists career educator
and counselor
Community
Resources
Group of
25 Participants

together with the frequent staff meeting and team building exercises, reduced any evidence of role conflict; thus staff were able to plan and function as a unit and thereby create a learning environment that was well suited to students' needs.

Figure 46

Did the staff at your program work as a team or individually?

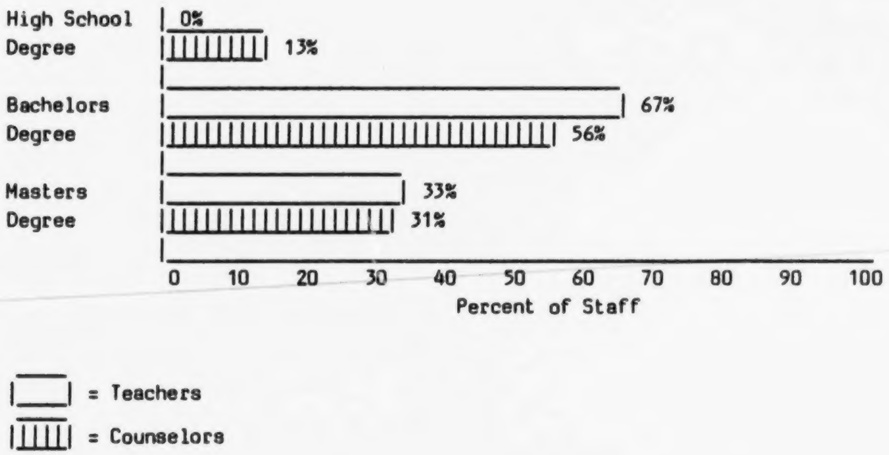


Commitment and Responsiveness

The literature on school effectiveness suggests that characteristics, such as the professional qualities of staff, staff experience, and staff job satisfaction strongly influence program success. Responses to the staff questionnaires indicated that these features were very evident in the AVE program. In terms of professional background, AVE Project sites were able to secure highly qualified teaching and counseling staff. As Figure 47 shows, all of the career educators graduated from college and one-third had earned a Masters degree. Furthermore, 91% of the career educators were certified to teach in New York State schools, with over 75% employed as full-time teachers during the regular school year. Counselors also were educationally qualified. Over half completed their Bachelors degree and an additional 31% obtained a Masters degree.

Figure 47

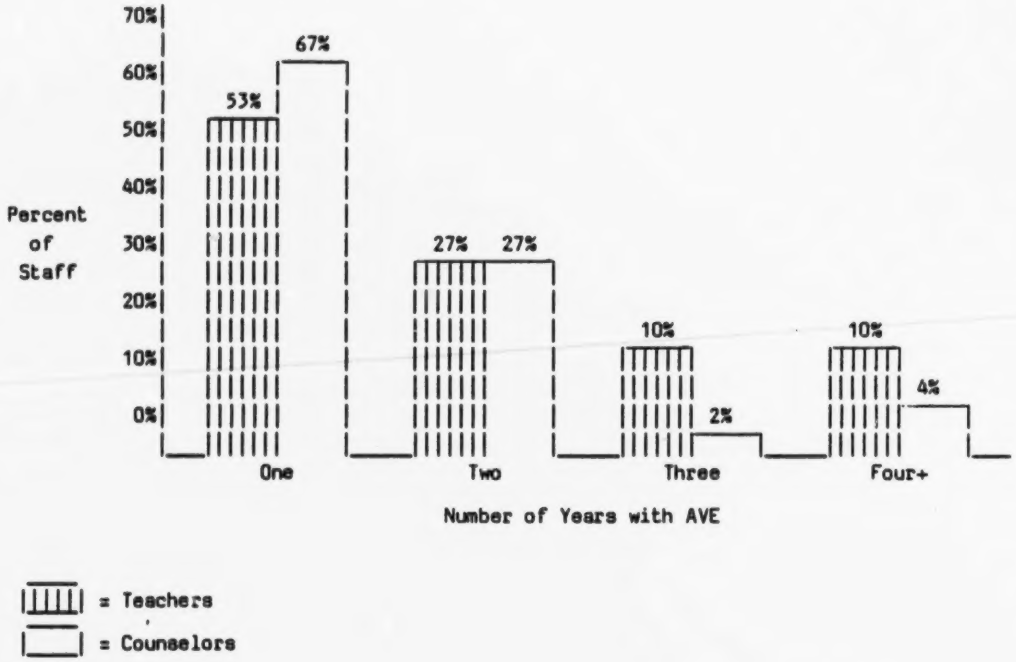
Highest Educational Degree Obtained by AVE Teachers and Counselors



Apart from educational credentials, teachers and counselors also were well experienced in their role. According to Figure 48, nearly half of the teachers and one-third of the counselors held their AVE position for two or more years. Twenty percent (20%) of the teachers, moreover, were involved with the AVE program for three years or more; the same was true for 4% of the counselors. Stability was evident among AVE project directors as well. Over 70% of the directors had more than one year's experience managing Project.AVE, while 30% were directors for four years or more.

Figure 48

Experience Level of AVE Teachers and Counselors



As the final measure of commitment and responsiveness, we directly asked all staff members and project directors the following question: "Were you satisfied with your involvement in Project AVE?" Again, the data were encouraging. As Figure 49 illustrates, practically all of the respondents said that they were either satisfied or very satisfied with their involvement in AVE. The following open-ended comments attest to staff support for the program:

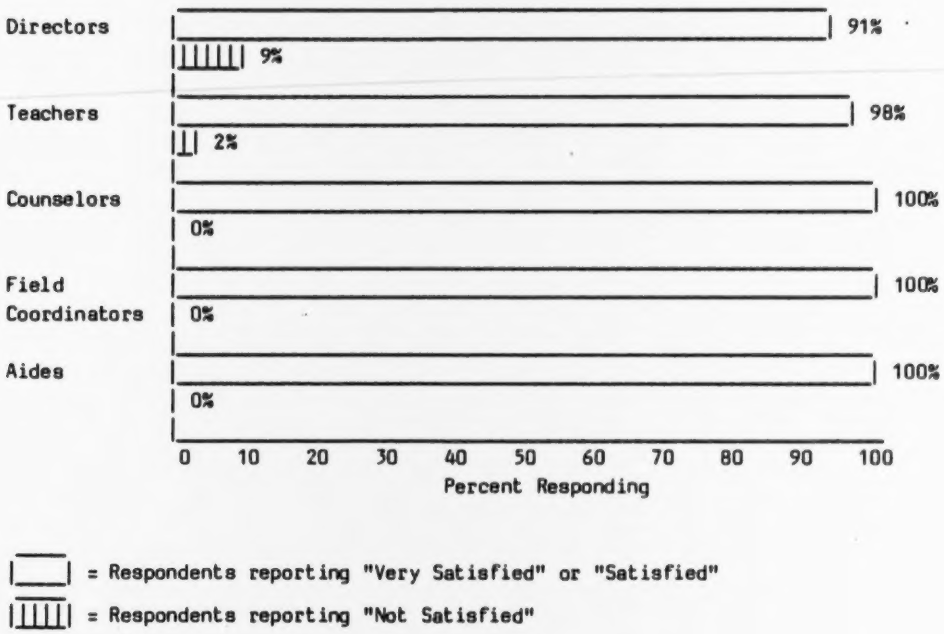
> This program was one of the most rewarding experiences of my career.
> (Project Director, Urban League of Albany)
>
> Seeing participants grow in spheres they will need in life made me happy and proud of our group—both staff and participants.
> (Teacher, National Society for Hebrew Day Schools)
>
> The philosophy of Project AVE is innovative and (with the test of time) should be brought into the school system and expanded.
> (Counselor, Brownsville Neighborhood Action Center)

> I feel the program is a good one. The participants get a lot out of the summer component. The program is a unique one.
> (Field Placement Coordinator, Chinatown Planning Council)

> I believe the AVE program can make a very real dent in youth unemployment and in school dropouts.
> (Aide, Latimer-Woods)

Figure 49

Were you satisfied with your involvement in Project AVE?



Overall, then, the analysis of the AVE program structure produced very positive results. The organizational climate within the project sites was conducive to learning. Specifically, staff were clear about their roles and responsibilities, internal management procedures were sound, and the staff functioned as a cohesive team. Besides the program structure, the personal commitment of AVE staff promoted effective learning. Staff were highly qualified and experienced and appeared to enjoy working with the population of AVE students.

3. Program Services

As noted in the Introduction, the AVE program shares many characteristics in common with exemplary youth training initiatives. In this section of the report we elaborate on the curricular features that make the program effective. In addition, we report on staff reactions to AVE curricular activities and learning materials.

Systematic Implementation

One of the most important features of Project AVE that certainly enhanced the quality of service delivery, was the systematic implementation cycle followed by all project sites. The cycle, which is graphically depicted in Figure 50, consisted of the following eight components:

1. Locate and Attract a Pool of Eligible Youth - Economically disadvantaged youth must first be found in reachable settings such as schools, churches, or community groups. They must also be encouraged to want to be in the Adolescent Vocational Experience.

2. Screening and Enrollment - Typically, there will be more youth wanting the Adolescent Vocational Exploration Program than can be accommodated in a single cycle. The process of selection and enrollment will reflect the particular level of need of "at-risk" youth that local planners desire to address through the program.

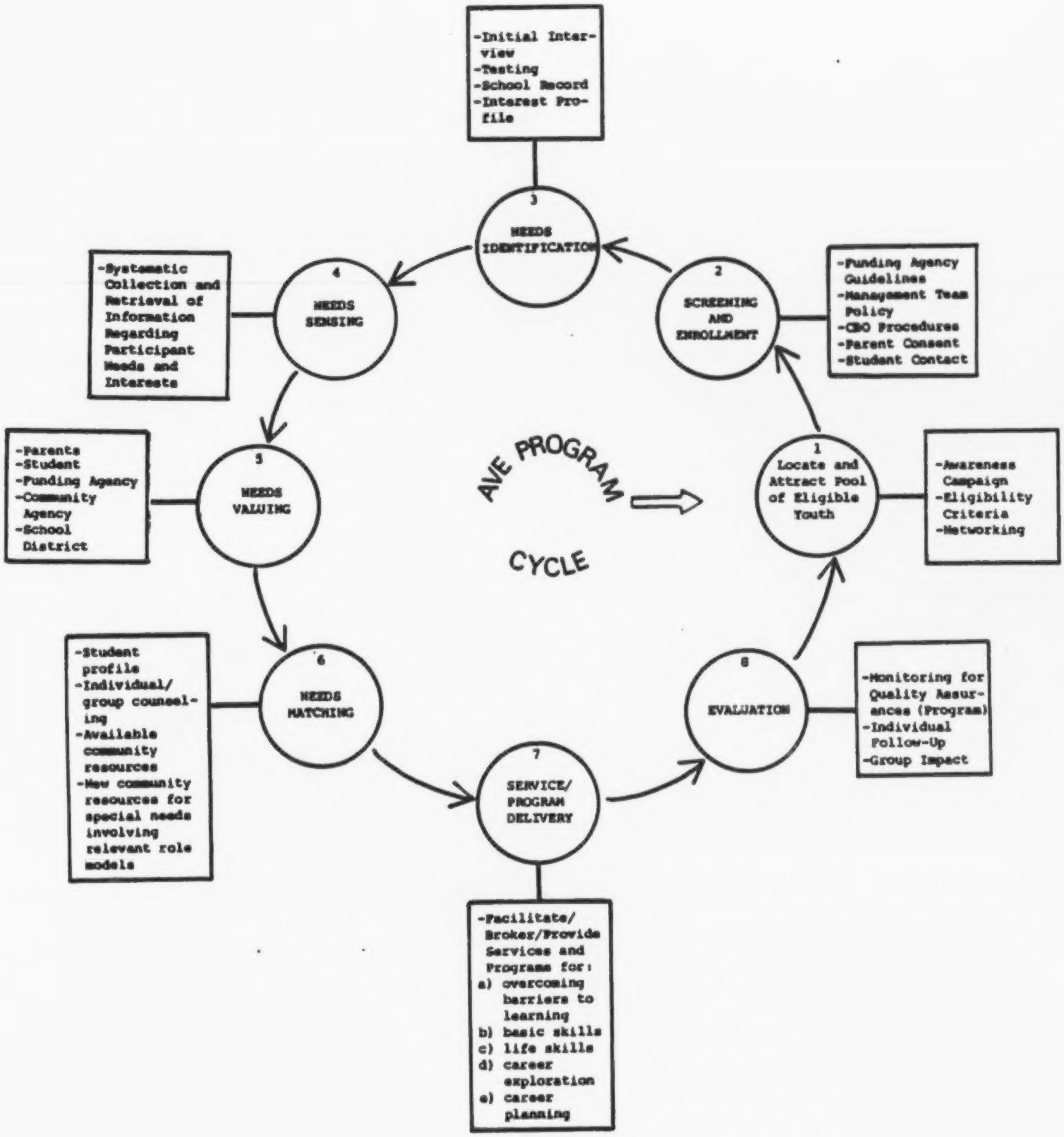
3. Needs Identification - A variety of means can be used to identify the individual needs and interests of Adolescent Vocational Exploration participants. Needs identification is a continuous process that provides a source of new information to individual participants, project staff and community resource persons for effective program planning.

4. Needs Sensing - Information on clients needs, interests and characteristics is recorded systematically to enable ongoing retrieval by diverse groups responsible for program concerns.

5. Needs Valuing - Persons and/or agencies with existing or potential interest in the well-being of the target group youth must come to value the resolution of identified needs and must be willing to take action to legitimize the role of others or act directly to address identified needs.

Figure 50

AVE Program Operation



AVE PROGRAM CYCLE
1 Locate and Attract Pool of Eligible Youth
-Awareness Campaign
-Eligibility Criteria
-Networking
2 SCREENING AND ENROLLMENT
-Funding Agency Guidelines
-Management Team Policy
-CBO Procedures
-Parent Consent
-Student Contact
3 NEEDS IDENTIFICATION
-Initial Interview
-Testing
-School Record
-Interest Profile
4 NEEDS SENSING
-Systematic Collection and Retrieval of Information Regarding Participant Needs and Interests
5 NEEDS VALUING
-Parents
-Student
-Funding Agency
-Community Agency
-School District
6 NEEDS MATCHING
-Student profile
-Individual/group counseling
-Available community resources
-New community resources for special needs involving relevant role models
7 SERVICE/PROGRAM DELIVERY
-Facilitate/Broker/Provide Services and Programs for:
a) overcoming barriers to learning
b) basic skills
c) life skills
d) career exploration
e) career planning
8 EVALUATION
-Monitoring for Quality Assurances (Program)
-Individual Follow-Up
-Group Impact

○ = Generic processes to address true target group needs

□ = AVE Program elements

6. Needs Matching - Identified needs and interests of the target group are matched with relevant existing and newly developed community resources to meet needs and interests of Adolescent Vocational Exploration Program participants.

7. Service/Program Delivery - Qualified providers deliver services and programs for the purpose of creating an appropriate career education experience for each Adolescent Vocational Exploration Program participant within the community of his/her residence. The Experience-Based Career Education (EBCE) model utilized by Adolescent Vocational Exploration Programs assumes that every human contact is a potential learning resource, but participants must first overcome barriers to learning such as negative attitudes toward schooling, poor concept of self and distrust of authority figures. In order to take maximum advantage of the rich community resources available through an Adolescent Vocational Exploration Program, participant readiness is enhanced through improvement in basic and life skills typically in the form of classroom instruction. In turn, the increased motivation generated from field experiences reinforce the value of learning fundamental skills as a prerequisite for career success. Career Planning is the final and most critical competency acquired by Adolescent Vocational Exploration Program participants and becomes a major lifelong deterrent to unsatisfactory career experiences.

8. Evaluation - The effects of the delivered services and programs are assessed continually (formative evaluation) and at strategic end-of-cycle periods (summative evaluation) to determine program impact as well as to improve the services and programs. Individual Adolescent Vocational Exploration Program participant outcomes are assessed by the program participants as well as mentors to determine residual needs for resolution recycling.

By rigorously adhering to these implementation guidelines, local projects ensured that "at risk" youth were identified and provided with an intensive course of instruction that matched their learning needs.

Interagency Collaboration

Project AVE is firmly grounded in the belief that no single agency can handle youth unemployment problems alone. As a result, the project established collaborative relationships with various agencies to assist in the program implementation process. School districts, for example, played a role in the selection component of the program by helping local project sites identify and locate "at risk" youth. In addition, schools were involved in academic credit evaluation reports, and in providing continuity of programs and services throughout the school year. Although the extent of school involvement varied across sites, there was an adamant feeling among sponsoring organizations that multi-level contacts with schools were critical to immediate and ultimate program success. Service Delivery Areas (SDAs) also were actively involved in the AVE cycle. These agencies paid participant wages, participated in the identification and screening components of AVE, and verified that participants met eligibility guidelines established by the Job Training Partnership Act. As discussed earlier, local employers also were extensively involved in the AVE cycle by serving as resources for the work experience aspects of the program. Finally, the New York State Departments of Labor and Education played a major role in program operations by maintaining quality control and providing technical assistance and training to project staff. The active collaboration of these agencies, thus, enabled AVE project sites to utilize the experiences and resources of several groups in developing an effective employability program for youth.

Comprehensive Service Strategies

Successful job training programs use comprehensive intervention strategies to target the multiple areas of deficiencies that exist among "at risk" youth. As an exemplary program, AVE also subscribes to an inclusive learning model to achieve its program goals. This model—Experienced-Based Career Education (EBCE)—is an individualized, goal-oriented and student-initiated learning process that combines classroom learning with counseling and simulated job experience in a real work environment. In the process, students can earn academic credit, explore the dimensions of many careers, and master many of the skills they will need to succeed in the labor market.

The specific EBCE approach used by Project AVE integrated 12 hours per week of classroom instruction with 12 hours of community resource exploration. Students were paid a stipend for the time spent in the program, and by the end of the summer program were expected to engage in at least one mini-project that provided direct exposure to careers of interest. The key features of the program are amplified in the following paragraphs.

Classroom Instruction

The classroom component of Project AVE focused on developing participant skills and attitudes in the areas needed to function in the working world. these areas were: basic skills, pre-employment skills, and work maturity. Examples of the specific competencies developed within the program include:

- Be able to read, speak, write, and communicate effectively
- Know where and how to find career/job information
- Complete a job application
- Understand the rules of work (punctuality, job roles and responsibilities
- Write a formal letter
- Impart desired information during an interview
- Develop a plan of action
- Understand expectations as they apply to friends, colleagues, and superordinates
- Clarify values
- Make decisions based on known facts
- Examine different options and set priorities

Student learning was orchestrated through individualized project plans that specified program goals, objectives, and action steps for accomplishing goals. The individualized instruction enabled participants to improve at their own pace; thus, students at varying levels of skill development could be served effectively by the program. This classroom experience was coupled with individual and group counseling.

Career Exploration

The career exploration component of AVE provided students with an opportunity to expand their classroom knowledge by observing actual job situations. This component involved career orientation activities such as discussion, guided tours, meeting resource people, reading background material, viewing related films, and so forth. The job component also involved work exploration and investigation activities such as: a) job shadowing, whereby the student accompanies the resource person on daily tasks; b) interviewing people in the organization; c) selecting a particular problem for research study; and d) hands-on experience in performing tasks and assignments. Work exploration activities were documented through the completion of mini-projects.

Mini-Projects

The AVE mini-projects engaged students in a manageable work experience that helped them to make more realistic decisions regarding future occupational choices. The projects required students to follow a sequence of career planning steps. First, participants had to clarify their career interests and learning goals; this was facilitated through discussions with the AVE career educators. Then, participants had to select a community resource that would provide them with firsthand experience about their learning interests. Following the resource selection, participants prepared a written project plan; each plan identified the purpose of the mini-project, the questions that would be investigated during the project, and the resources that would be used. Participants, then, were required to visit the resource outlined in the project plan and submit a written report detailing their experiences. Figure 51 presents a sample mini-project plan.

In summary, the AVE program provided an individualized learning model in which students could acquire basic educational skills, pre-employment competencies, and work maturity. Classroom learning and counseling were supplemented with work exploration activities to enable students to expand their theoretical understandings of various occupations.

Figure 51

MINI-PROJECT PLAN

PARTICIPANT H. W. Smith PROJECT NO. 2

CE APPROVAL Sam Jones DATE 7/15/86 DATE PROJECT STARTED 7/18/85

TECHNICAL ADVISOR(S) (if any) S. Williams, Vice-President and G. Dixon, Assistant Vice-President - A New York City Bank

I. PROJECT DESCRIPTION

A. Title: "Business and Me"

Subject Area(s) Covered
1. Accounting
2. Business Management
3. Public Relations
4. Computer Technology

B. Theme (Please give a brief description of your project.) To learn about the various positons in the banking industry and to become knowledgeable of what requirements are necessary to work in a bank. Also, to learn how I can apply my strong abilities in school, incorporating them into advancing my business goals.

C. Questions to be Investigated

1. What are the various positions in the business field?
2. What special courses should I take in school to advance my business career?
3. How important is public relatioin in the banking world?
4. Is it necessary for me to have computer training?
5. What are the prerequisites for climbing the corporate ladder?
6. How hard is the competition in the business field?
7. What is the starting salary(ies) and how much can I expect to earn in the future?
8. Is there a market for business personnel?
9. How many hours will I have to work per week and is overtime expected on a regular basis, periodically, etc.?

FOR LEARNING COORDINATOR USE ONLY

Mid-Term Review	S.J. Initials	8/6/85 Date	End-of-Term Review	Initials	8/13/85 Date

Figure 51 (continued)

II. IDENTIFICATION OF RESOURCE PERSONS, ORGANIZATIONS AND COMMUNITY RESOURCES

A. Completed Visits (Identify resources already visited for Orientation)

Resource Name	Address	Telephone	RP	RO	CR	Hours Spent
S. Williams	123-45 Broadway	(212)123-4567	x			1/2
G. Dixon	123-45 Broadway	(212)123-4567	X			1

B. Planned Visits (Identify the resources you PLAN to work with. Repeat names from above if you plan additional visits. Your project MUST include an Exploration with at least one RP or RO.)

			Activity Level*						
Resource Name	Address	Telephone	O	E	I	RP	RO	CR	Hours Spent
York College	00-89 Jamaica Ave.	(718)123-4567	x			x			1 1/2

*O=Orientation; E=Exploration; I=Investigation

C. Related Reading/Research (Give Titles and Authors)

Opportunities in Accounting by Martin Rosenberg

Opportunities in Management by Irene Place and Leonard Roberts

III. SPECIAL REQUIREMENTS OR PREREQUISITES NECESSARY FOR SITE VISITS (See Resource Guides. Some sites require special insurance, health certificates, etc.)

Before you go on an interview you need to research the occupation. You must formulate questions to ask the interviewer.

A. Prerequisites None

B. Materials or Equipment Notebook and Pen

IV. ESTIMATED TIME REQUIRED FOR THE FOLLOWING ACTIVITIES (NA=not applicable)

A. Site Visits 3 Hrs. Product Production 10 Hrs.
B. Reading 2 Hrs. Other (specify) 3 TOTAL HOURS 18

LAST DATE FOR COMMITMENT TO COMPLETE PROJECT 8/15/85

PLANNED PROJECT COMPLETION DATE 8/8/85

Staff Perceptions of the AVE Curriculum

As a means of contributing to the overall improvement of Project AVE, staff were surveyed at the conclusion of the summer program to determine their perceptions regarding AVE instructional activities and the project materials. In terms of the instructional activities, the majority of the AVE teachers expressed satisfaction with the EBCE curriculum model and said that they closely followed the model in organizing classroom lessons. When asked about successful classroom strategies, teachers identified "workshops" and "group discussions" as the most effective instructional techniques. Team building activities and role playing also were cited as effective strategies. Regarding program weaknesses, the most common obstacle mentioned was lack of time. Many staff felt that eight weeks simply were insufficient to accomplish all that they had anticipated. Apart from the time concern, several staff members expressed concern about excessive paperwork, transportation problems, inadequate site facilities, and disruptive student behavior.

Career educators and counselors also were asked to evaluate the quality of AVE curricular materials. Table 13 indicates the percentage of staff who rated the materials as "very helpful" or "not helpful." Several interesting results emerged from the analysis. First, the majority of resources were considered very useful by most teachers and counselors. However, there were noticeable differences in the magnitude of responses from these staff members. For example, all but three resources received higher ratings from counselors than teachers, and in several cases the difference was above 20 percentage points (see "Job Seeking Capabilities Test," "Careers: Exploration and Decision Workbook," "Department of Labor: Career Education Workbook," "Job Preparation Curriculum" and "Secrets of the Hidden Job Market"). Second, while the magnitude of the ratings differed between counselors and teachers, there was

Table 13

1985 EVALUATION OF AVE MATERIALS

	Percent Responding "Very Helpful"		Percent Responding "Not Helpful"	
Curriculum Material	Career Educators	Counselors	Career Educators	Counselors
Working Makes Sense (Pitman)	81%	79%	3%	0%
Using the Want Ads (Janus)	66%	79%	3%	3%
My Job Application File (Janus)	65%	67%	6%	0%
New York State Education Department AVE Guide to Program Implementation	71%	64%	3%	3%
Job Interview Kit (Janus)	59%	69%	3%	0%
Job Seeking Capabilities Test	50%	71%	5%	3%
Careers: Exploration and Decision Workbook (Pitman)	50%	70%	3%	3%
Choice: Career Notes	59%	63%	0%	0%
SRA Math Index	53%	64%	5%	3%
SRA Reading Index	55%	60%	5%	3%
Steps to a Career Choice (Catholic News)	57%	54%	3%	0%
Department of Labor: Career Education Workbook	38%	65%	3%	4%
Work Attitude Survey	47%	63%	3%	9%
Career Skills Assessment Program (Career Decision Making Skills)	39%	53%	16%	18%
New York State Division for Youth: Job Preparation Curriculum	33%	58%	6%	5%
Secrets of the Hidden Job Market (Beeline Books)	35%	56%	10%	0%
Steps to a School Choice (Catholic News)	39%	42%	13%	0%

consistency in the pattern of responses. For instance, both staff types agreed that "Working Makes Sense" and "Using the Want Ads" were particularly useful resources. Conversely, these staff members felt that the "Career Skills Assessment Program" was the least useful resource.

Process Evaluation Summary

The evaluation of the AVE intervention highlighted specific program features that are associated with positive student outcomes. As observed, active employer participation was a key component of AVE. Nearly 1,400 public and private agencies served as work exploration resources for program participants. This level of involvement enabled 80% of the AVE students to have direct work exposure and thereby develop many important employability skills. AVE also was able to attract experienced and committed staff members to work effectively with the "at risk" population. Staff dedication and enthusiasm provided a positive learning climate in which students could safely and productively function. Finally, consistent with exemplary job training programs, AVE utilized a comprehensive learning model that addressed the multiple areas of deficiencies that exists among the seriously "at risk" youth. Through classroom experience and direct work exposure students were provided with needed basic education, pre-employment, and work maturity skills that would best maximize their chances for future job success.

IV. CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

No simple answers exist for solving the youth unemployment problem. But the findings from the current evaluation suggest that the Adolescent Vocational Exploration Program has done much to increase young people's chances of gaining employment and functioning productively in the labor market. In particular, the results revealed that the AVE program:

°Made an important academic difference in the lives of participants
°Encouraged participants to become more interested in school
°Successfully increased students' pre-employment skills
°Had a decided impact on students' work maturity
°Created a sense of pride and commitment among participants and their parents

These are important findings and suggest that AVE should continue to function as an exemplary model for job training excellence. To further advance the quality and effectiveness of the program, the following recommendations are offered to key state and local level decision makers.

1. **The number of AVE project sites should be expanded.** On a yearly basis, AVE serves approximately 1,000 "at risk" youth in New York State. Statistics, however, reveal that more than 100 times as many young people cold benefit from the program. For example, the 40,000 high school students who dropped out of New York City schools last year could have profited from AVE, as could the 100,000 "at risk" teenagers across the state who were not served by the project. In order to address the needs of these unserved but "at risk" youth, we recommend that additional state monies be allocated to other agencies in New York that seek solutions to youth unemployment problems. In addition, we suggest that AVE decision-makers utilize the State's Transferring Success Program to take advantage of the funds that are available for agencies to replicate exemplary educational programs such as AVE.

2. **Efforts must be undertaken to improve the AVE Fall Program.** Reports from AVE Project Directors, as well as feedback from SED field visits, suggest that the Fall component of Project AVE continues to be problematic. The low student enrollment is a concern, as is the marked unevenness in activities across sites, and in many cases, the lack of focus. Highly related to these two concerns is the tremendous variation in projects' relationships with the schools; with certain

projects, schools are very supportive of the AVE approach, with other projects, however, school relations can be considered tenuous, at best. To remedy this situation, our recommendation is to conduct a careful study of the Fall program in order to specifically identify the strengths and weaknesses of the various intervention strategies. The findings from this study, then, would be disseminated statewide to promote consistency in the Fall component across AVE project sites.

3. **Incentives are needed to promote greater student participation in the Fall Program.** As noted above, student participation is a major obstacle to the successful orchestration of the Fall component. Reports of project directors and state field coordinators reveal that too few students take advantage of the Fall program. Low enrollment is especially evident in the New York City projects where the large number of schools and the limited number of AVE staff constrain the effectiveness of an in-school program. To encourage greater student participation in this program, we feel that certain incentives are needed. Stipends, especially, would increase student involvement. And, for a small number of students who stand the greatest risk of dropping out of school, this financial incentive should be a serious consideration. For other students, incentives such as social, sports, or cultural events might work very well to promote greater Fall involvement in Project AVE.

4. **Staff training should focus on material usage.** By and large, AVE staff expressed satisfaction with the initial curriculum training by the New York State Education Department. According to staff reports and the training evaluation, the fundamentals of the EBCE curriculum were well covered by trainers. Nonetheless, the end-of-year staff surveys revealed major differences among staff regarding curriculum resource usage. Staff from the newer AVE sites, particularly, found certain resources to be inadequate and, hence, did not use them. More experienced staff, however, seemed to value the instructional utility of most curricular products. This would suggest that new staff may require further training in material usage, for example, how to use the Career Skills Assessment Program or the Career Education Workbook as instructional tools. In this regard, we recommend that the initial AVE training incorporate a workshop that would specifically address the material usage needs of staff.

5. **A follow-up study of the AVE program is needed.** The annual evaluations of AVE have provided strong evidence concerning the immediate effects of the program upon students' basic education, pre-employment, and work maturity competencies. But the question remains as to the long-term impact of the program. Specifically, there is a need to determine if the increases that participants made in these competency areas

during the summer, are maintained over time. More importantly, there is a need to understand the ultimate impact of AVE upon school dropout rate and eventual job placement. We thus recommend that a follow-up study of AVE graduates be conducted during the 1986-87 school year. This study would trace the school and employment histories of the 1980-1986 AVE graduates and thereby provide a wealth of important data concerning the lasting effects of job training efforts for "at risk" youth.

6. **Program planners should explore ways to take advantage of technology to enhance the delivery of the AVE program.** The technological revolution has opened up tremendous opportunities for increasing learner motivation, as well as effecting higher degrees of learner accomplishments. It is recommended that a special committee be established to screen relevant software and hardware for potential use in the AVE program. The committee's work should also include specific suggestions for how future AVE program sites could best utilize technology with their participants.

APPENDIX A

Roles and Responsibilities of AVE Staff

A. Executive Director

The executive director's responsibility included contracting with the Department of Labor and overseeing the installation of the AVE program.

B. Project Director

The project directors were directly responsible for the day-to-day management of the AVE programs. Specifically, their duties included:

-Initial recruiting and hiring of project staff.

-Coordinating other project staff's activities in conjunction with the executive directors of CBOs.

-Creating a climate of support for career education activities and vocational exploration with educational institutions, local businesses, community leaders and government agencies.

-Making field visits to work sites and classroom sites.

-Coordinating ongoing evaluation activities.

C. Career Educator

The career educators reported to both their project director and their executive directors. Their primary responsibility was to instruct youth in all aspects of career education. Specifically, their duties involved:

-Providing information about careers and educational opportunities and programs, including: non-directive counseling that encourages self-exploration and individual choice making.

-Providing job information and access, including:

"interpretation of local labor market data
"determination of vocational skill levels
"coaching for job procurement: interviewing, resume writing, application procedures
"helping individuals to market themselves
"helping individuals to achieve a self-concept built on successful experiences
"teaching of basic communication skills

-Providing academic and career advisement, including:

"assistance with assessment of skills
"help in identifying gaps between what is sought and one's current situation

°offering such workshops as: back to school skill acquisition, math, anxiety, writing refreshment
°remedial assistance as needed

-Evaluating competencies.

-Assessing students' interests, aptitudes and skills.

-Analyzing test results and providing interpretation to students.

D. Counselor

The counselors reported to the executive directors and the project directors. Their main responsibility was to provide necessary counseling activities to participants, either in groups or in individual settings. In addition, they worked closely with the career educators to help them with the classroom component of the project. Specifically, their duties included:

-Helping participants cope with and manage stress: by improving participants' self-image and self-respect and by providing workshops in such topics as: parenting assertiveness, financial management, consumer education.

-Assisting with career education advancement.

-Disseminating information to the target population regarding services available.

-Providing academic and career advice.

-Acting as liaison between employer and employee, teacher and student.

-Referring youth to appropriate support agencies when necessary.

E. Program Aide

The program aides reported to the project directors. Their main function was to assist the career educators, counselors and field placement coordinator. Specifically, this involved:

-Assisting in workshops.

-Providing support to participants.

-Assisting other staff with paperwork.

- Scoring tests.
- Assisting in educational instruction in the classroom.

F. Field Placement Coordinator

The field placement coordinators reported to both the executive director and the project director. Their major responsibility was to organize and coordinate the community resource segment of the AVE curriculum. Specifically, their duties included:

- Identifying and obtaining cooperation for community resources.
- Serving as liaison with vocational exploration sites to orient employers to the purpose of the program and to establish curriculum of community involvement activities for the youth.
- Creating a climate of support for vocational exploration activities with local businesses.
- Serving as liaison between supply pool and demand (bringing person and job together).
- Monitoring participant progress of field activities.

G. Bookkeeper

The bookkeepers reported to both project directors and executive directors. Their responsibilities included:

- Keeping fiscal and personnel records.
- Preparing bills and vouchers.
- Preparing all materials and financial statements for CETA/AVE programs.

H. Typist

The typists reported to project directors. Their responsibilities included:

- Typing all materials used by other staff.
- Answering telephones, filing and performing other clerical duties as appropriate.

COMMUNITY BASED ORGANIZATIONS

1985 ADOLESCENT VOCATIONAL EXPLORATION PROGRAM PROFILES

BUFFALO URBAN LEAGUE, INC.

455 William Street
Buffalo, New York 14204

The Community-Based Organization

Executive Director: Leroy R. Coles, Jr.

The Buffalo Urban League is a non-profit interracial community organization with 113 affiliates in the United States. Its mission is to enable Black Americans and other minorities to cultivate and exercise their full human potential through programs in advocacy, education, employment, housing and urban development, health, social welfare, citizenship education, and administration of justice.

Program Description

Summer AVE Project Director: Lloyd A. Morse

AVE '85 Site Location: 465 Washington Street/25 High Street
Buffalo, New York 14203

Enrollment and Attendance: 50 participants at beginning; 54 at end. Average attendance rate was 96%.

Primary Resources:

Twenty-five (25) resources were developed and made available to participant; 25 resources were used during the seminar. Fifty-four (54) participants received field placements. Primary resources were local colleges and universities providing college entrance information, and public and college libraries offering speakers and films. The resources that were of most interest to participants were the Buffalo News, radio station WBLK, and television stations WGRZ and WKBK. These resources presented participants with knowledge regarding the variety of different and exciting occupations within the communications industry.

Instruction:

AVE participants received instruction in career decision-making skills, job application and resume preparation, interviewing techniques, using the want ads, career and vocational exploration, written and oral communication skills, basic mathematics and reading comprehension. Self-evaluation procedures, assessment of life skills and values clarification were also discussed and developed.

1985 Program Evaluation Summary

Basic Skills:

Participants demonstrated improved performance in reading comprehension on the SRA Reading Index.

Pre-Employment Skills:

Participants demonstrated statistically significant growth in decision making ability as measured by the Career Decision Making Scale.

Participants demonstrated statistically significant growth in job seeking skills as measured by the Job Seeking Capabilities Test.

Work Maturity Skills:

Participants demonstrated more positive sex and ethnic fairness attitudes on the Work Attitude Survey.

Academic Credit:

One elective credit at the secondary school level (grades 7-12) which, for high school students (grades 9-12), may be applied to high school diploma requirement.

Participants' Comments:

I was encouraged to go to college and get a good education.

I learned how to communicate more with people. I have lost a bit of my shyness. My career educator has helped me improve my self-concept.

I learned how important an education is to achieve the kind of job I'm interested in. I learned what skills and background knowledge I needed for my future career. I also learned that the responsibility of becoming successful in a career is up to myself.

Parents' Comments:

She has become more responsive to school work and her attitude has gotten better. Talks about the project, seems to have enjoyed the program very much. Wants to set goals for the future, especially concerning a job. Says the project was and is a good learning experience during the summer.

She became more confident about her career choice.

She knows how to prepare a resume and where to look for work and how to dress.

This program encouraged her to finish her two years left at high school.

BRONX CENTER FOR PROGRESSIVE SERVICES, INC.

1680 Seward Avenue
Bronx, New York 10473

The Community-Based Organization

Executive Director: Mr. Robert Smith

The Bronx Center for Progressive Services, Inc. Youth Incentive Program is a "not for profit" community organization, composed of civic minded people, who are firmly committed to meeting the total needs of the youth in the Soundview Community. This program was designed for the purpose of addressing the problems of unemployment, lack of skills training, non-exposure to the labor market, and improving the relationship between all ethnic groups, youth and senior citizens. The initial purpose was to provide a multiservice program in the areas of tutoring service, job training and counseling, family support, health activities and lecture series offered by business persons and local merchants. Through these services, the Bronx Center for Progressive Services helps to improve the community youth attitudes towards their environment and employment to reduce crime and delinquency, and to promote positive growth and development of the teenage population.

Program Description

Summer AVE Project Director: Ms. Linda Mitchell

AVE '85 Site Location: P.S. 107
1695 Seward Avenue
Bronx, New York 10473

Enrollment and Attendance: 50 participants at beginning; 48 at end. Average attendance rate 92%.

Primary Resources:

One hundred (100) resources developed, 75 used. Primary resources used were: Planned Parenthood of New York City, Donnell Library, Youth Education through Sports, Inc., Soundview Health Center, Con Edison, and Lehman College.

Instruction:

AVE participants received instruction in career decision-making skills, job application and resume preparation, interviewing techniques, using the want ads, career and vocational exploration, written and oral communication skills, basic mathematics and reading comprehension. Self-evaluation procedures, assessment of life skills and values clarification were also discussed and developed.

1985 Program Evaluation Summary

Basic Skills:

Participants demonstrated statistically significant gains in math performance as measured by the SRA Arithmetic Index.

Participants demonstrated improved performance in reading comprehension on the SRA Reading Index.

Pre-Employment Skills:

Participants demonstrated improved decision making ability on the Career Decision Making Scale.

Participants demonstrated improved job seeking skills on the Job Seeking Capabilities Test.

Academic Credit:

One elective credit at the secondary school level (grades 7-12) which, for high school students (grades 9-12), may be applied to high school diploma requirement.

Participants' Comments:

> In the AVE program I learned how to write a resume, dress for an interview, learned how to speak to an interviewer, learned how to find information about my future career. I would guess that these things will help me in the future.
>
> I learned to have positive thoughts about life. Also look into another career. Never fall back on anything in life. Always say you can do it. Be proud of whatever you do in life.
>
> AVE has taught me to be more knowledgeable about how to find a job.

Parents' Comments

> My child expresses himself more openly. Reads better, more efficient in homework.
>
> It gave him a better sense of what a dollar is worth. Learned the importance of planning as it relates to money. He is more open as far as communicating.
>
> She is more motivated towards a career.
>
> More confidence, better attitude towards others.

BROWNSVILLE NEIGHBORHOOD ACTION CENTER #1

1574 Pitkin Avenue
Brooklyn, New York 11212

The Community-Based Organization

Executive Director: Wilma Carthan

The Brownsville Neighborhood Action Center #1 Youth Training and Placement Program has been in existence for 15 years. It has been providing direct supportive youth services for the community for the past five years. The program's overall purpose and activity is to establish and coordinate a Youth Work Project, Career Awareness, Job Training and Placement Counseling, Tutorial Assistance in Reading and Math, Vocational Exploration, Youth Leadership, and Parent Council.

Program Description

Summer AVE Project Director: Wilma Carthan

AVE '85 Site Location: J.H.S. 263
210 Chester Street
Brooklyn, New York 11212

Enrollment and Attendance: 50 participants at beginning; 48 at end. Average attendance rate 96%.

Primary Resources:

Thirty (30) resources were developed and made available to participants. Twenty-six (26) were used during the summer. Thirty (30) participants obtained field placements during the summer. Primary resources used were Youth Service and Housing Agencies; Health Centers; local merchants, precincts; real estate and legal offices; fast food establishments; telephone company, Brooklyn Union Gas Company, and Con Edison.

Instruction:

AVE participants received instruction in career decision-making skills, job application and resume preparation, interviewing techniques, using the want ads, career and vocational exploration, written and oral communication skills, basic mathematics and reading comprehension. Self-evaluation procedures, assessment of life skills and values clarification were also discussed and developed.

1985 Program Evaluation Summary

Basic Skills:

Participants demonstrated statistically significant gains in math performance as measured by the SRA Arithmetic Index.

Participants demonstrated statistically significant gains in reading comprehension as measured by the SRA Reading Index.

Pre-Employment Skills:

Participants demonstrated improved decision making ability on the Career Decision Making Scale.

Participants demonstrated statistically significant growth in job seeking skills as measured by the Job Seeking Capabilities Test.

Work Maturity Skills:

Participants demonstrated statistically significant improvement in sex and ethnic fairness attitudes as measured by the Work Attitude Survey.

Academic Credit:

One elective credit at the secondary school level (grades 7-12) which, for high school students (grades 9-12), may be applied to high school diploma requirement.

Participants' Comments:

> I learned how to dress for a job, how to fill out job applications.
>
> I learned how to prepare a resume and dress for a job.
>
> I learned how to get along with others.

Parents' Comments

> My child believes more in himself, shows more confidence, speaks up more.
>
> My child has a more serious outlook on life.
>
> My child writes and speaks much better.

CHINATOWN PLANNING COUNCIL, INC.

13 Elizabeth Street
New York, New York 10013

The Community-Based Organization

Executive Director: Charles Wang

Chinatown Planning Council, Inc. (CPC), incorporated in 1965 as the first Chinese American social service, education, and planning organizations, serves over 2,000 Asian Americans in organized programs and over 200 walk-in cases per day. The major thrust is to develop manpower and education programs to assist immigrant youth, adults and families in acquiring basic skills and to enable them to move into the mainstream of general society when possible, and become full participants in their new homeland.

Program Description

Summer AVE Project Director: Bill Kwong

AVE '85 Site Location: 48 Henry Street
New York, New York 10002

Enrollment and Attendance: 50 participants at beginning; 49 at end. Average attendance rate was 98%.

Primary Resources:

Forty-eight (48) resources developed, 40 used, 25 placements. Primary resources used were: Donnell Public Library; private agencies, such as Chinatown Family Planning, University Settlement for Older Adults, and Urban Business Assistance Corporation; speakers, such as David Lui, illustrator and graphic designer, Wendy Kyman, health educator, and Arthur McInerney, trial attorney; government agencies, such as Planned Parenthood Center, and New York Public Interest Research Agency.

Instruction:

AVE participants received instruction in career decision-making skills, job application and resume preparation, interviewing techniques, using the want ads, career and vocational exploration, written and oral communication skills, basic mathematics and reading comprehension. Self-evaluation procedures, assessment of life skills and values clarification were also discussed and developed.

1985 Program Evaluation Summary

Basic Skills:

Participants demonstrated improved mathematics performance on the SRA Arithmetic Index.

Participants demonstrated statistically significant gains in reading comprehension as measured by the SRA Reading Index.

Pre-Employment Skills:

Participants demonstrated statistically significant growth in decision making ability as measured by the Career Decision Making Scale.

Participants demonstrated statistically significant growth in job seeking skills as measured by the Job Seeking Capabilities Test.

Work Maturity Skills:

Participants demonstrated statistically significant improvement in sex and ethnic fairness attitudes as measured by the Work Attitude Survey.

Academic Credit:

One elective credit at the secondary school level (grades 7-12) which, for high school students (grades 9-12), may be applied to high school diploma requirement.

Participants' Comments:

> I know what kind of career or job that I want when I finish college.
>
> I learned that I have to look into the job field before deciding what I want to be.
>
> I think Project AVE was helpful in counseling and job interviews.

Parents' Comments:

> My child learned about different careers and got some experience from field placement. Also, has more good friends.
>
> My child learned more English.
>
> My child is interested in working more.

COLONY SOUTH BROOKLYN HOUSES, INC.

297 Dean Street
Brooklyn, New York 11217

The Community-Based Organization

Executive Director: Mr. William K. Banks

Colony South Brooklyn Houses, Inc. (CSBH) is the oldest settlement house in Brooklyn. From a small beginning in 1904, CSBH has become the largest multi-service, private, non-profit agency serving the disadvantaged in the borough. CSBH sponsors and manages programs from Brooklyn Heights, Williamsburg, Fort Greene, East New York, Boerum Hill and Brownsville. These programs include six day care centers, senior citizens center, two year-round youth oriented community centers, Summer Youth Employment Program, alternative Junior High School in School District #19, New York City's first day care center for severely handicapped children, after school and evening programs in School District #15, the first Job T.A.P. Center to open in New York City one specific training program for the unemployed, and Amboy Neighborhood Center, a relocation center to house families made homeless by fire.

Program Description

Summer AVE Project Director: Mrs. Sandy Hall-Trawick

AVE '85 Site Location: 297 Dean Street
Brooklyn, New York 11217

Enrollment and Attendance: 50 participants at beginning; 46 at end. Average attendance rate was 86%.

Primary Resources:

Forty-four (44) resources developed, 35 used, 31 placements. Primary resources used were: New York Stock Exchange, Police Academy, Greater New York Fund, Long Island College and Harlem Hospitals, WBLS, United Nations, Con Edison Nuclear Reactor at Indian Point, Platinum Factory, and Fire Fighters Museum.

Instruction:

AVE participants received instruction in career decision-making skills, job application and resume preparation, interviewing techniques, using the want ads, career and vocational exploration, written and oral communication skills, basic mathematics and reading comprehension. Self-evaluation procedures, assessment of life skills and values clarification were also discussed and developed.

1985 Program Evaluation Summary

Basic Skills:

Participants demonstrated statistically significant gains in math performance as measured by the SRA Arithmetic Index.

Participants demonstrated improved performance in reading comprehension on the SRA Reading Index.

Pre-Employment Skills:

Participants demonstrated statistically significant growth in decision making ability as measured by the Career Decision Making Scale.

Participants demonstrated improved job seeking skills on the Job Seeking Capabilities Test.

Work Maturity Skills:

Participants demonstrated statistically significant improvement in sex and ethnic fairness attitudes as measured by the Work Attitude Survey.

Academic Credit:

One elective credit at the secondary school level (grades 7-12) which, for high school students (grades 9-12), may be applied to high school diploma requirement.

Participants' Comments:

> I've learned that it takes a lot of drive and discipline to achieve your goals. Also, you must prepare yourself mentally and physically for the working world.
>
> I learned never to make a mistake in my life like dropping out of school and dealing with any kind of drugs. And to prepare myself for the future in the world of working.
>
> I learned how to fill out applications and resumes and by going to the library and doing research I learned more about my career.

Parents' Comments:

> On the whole I would say that my son has learned much more about the business world since being in the AVE program. He had a chance to visit jobs and talk with business people about the job market. I am very glad that he was allowed to participate in the AVE program.
>
> He has a better attitude about working thanks to the AVE program.
>
> I think it was good for her to be in the AVE program because she improved her work.

ECONOMIC OPPORTUNITY COMMISSION OF NASSAU COUNTY, INC.
106 Main Street
Hempstead, New York 11550

The Community-Based Organization

Executive Director: Mr. John L. Kearse

The Economic Opportunity Commission of Nassau County, Inc. is a non-profit, anti-poverty agency which provides a wide variety of services to economically disadvantaged residents of Nassau County. Through its 11 delegate Community Action Programs, located in poverty target areas throughout the County, the EOC operates such programs as Head Start and day care; senior citizen centers; a summer feeding program; year-round educational, cultural, recreational, and athletic activities; and a number of other community organization activities based on community needs. The Nassau EOC has sponsored AVE Programs in 1980, 1981, 1982, 1983, and 1985.

Program Description

Summer AVE Project Director: James A. Watkins

AVE '85 Site Location: Nassau Community College
Cluster E. Room 309 and 311
Garden City, NY 11530

Enrollment and Attendance: 50 participants at beginning; 48 at end. Average attendance rate was 94%.

Primary Resources:

Thirty-five (35) resources developed, 35 used, 46 placements. Primary resources used were State University of New York at Farmingdale, radio station WINS, Nassau County Court House, World Trade Center Commodities Exchange, American Museum of Natural History, LILCO facilities at Hicksville and Glenwood Landing, and the South Street Seaport Museum and Theatre.

Instruction:

AVE participants received instruction in career decision-making skills, job application and resume preparation, interviewing techniques, using the want ads, career and vocational exploration, written and oral communication skills, basic mathematics and reading comprehension. Self-evaluation procedures, assessment of life skills and values clarification were also discussed and developed.

1985 Program Evaluation Summary

Basic Skills

Participants demonstrated statistically significant gains in math performance as measured by the SRA Arithmetic Index.

Participants demonstrated statistically significant gains in reading comprehension as measured by the SRA Reading Index.

Pre-Employment Skills:

Participants demonstrated improved decision making ability on the Career Decision Making Scale.

Participants demonstrated statistically significant growth in job seeking skills as measured by the Job Seeking Capabilities Test.

Work Maturity Skills:

Participants demonstrated more positive sex and ethnic fairness attitudes on the Work Attitude Survey.

Academic Credit:

One elective credit at the secondary school level (grades 7-12) which, for high school students (grades 9-12), may be applied to high school diploma requirement.

Participants' Comments:

> I learned you must have a positive attitude towards everything you do and that you must always do your best in whatever you do.
>
> I learned how to go about finding a job and how I should dress on the job.
>
> I learned more about my career goal and how to get more knowledge of that career. I also learned that it is more serious than I thought about getting a good job.

Parents' Comments:

> He is more interested in working and seems to want to [go] further in the field he has chosen. He would like to continue in the program for the winter.
>
> Knows how to apply for a job, and knows more about the career she wants to go into.
>
> She has become more responsible.

EDAD, INC.

2112 Second Avenue
New York, New York 10029

The Community-Based Organization

Executive Director: Mr. Edward Auerbach

EDAD, Inc. is a senior citizen agency providing employment, training, education, housing and nutritional programs to East Harlem's aging residents. In addition, the agency has sponsored summer youth training programs from 1979 to the present.

Program Description

Summer AVE Project Director: Mr. Rene Rodriguez

AVE '85 Site Location: 2112 Second Avenue
New York, New York 10029

Enrollment and Attendance: 50 participants at beginning; 48 at end. Average attendance rate was 94%.

Primary Resources:

Fifty-seven (57) resources developed, 57 used, 25 placements. Primary resources used were Metropolitan and Mt. Sinai Hospitals, New York City Police Department, SCANT Drug Prevention Program, New York City Fire Department, Bronx Criminal Court, Queens District Attorney's Office, IBM Corporation, and the United States Army Recruiting Department.

Instruction:

AVE participants received instruction in career decision-making skills, job application and resume preparation, interviewing techniques, using the want ads, career and vocational exploration, written and oral communication skills, basic mathematics and reading comprehension. Self-evaluation procedures, assessment of life skills and values clarification were also discussed and developed.

1985 Program Evaluation Summary

Basic Skills:

Participants demonstrated statistically significant gains in math performance as measured by the SRA Arithmetic Index.

Participants demonstrated statistically significant gains in reading comprehension as measured by the SRA Reading Index.

Pre-Employment Skills:

Participants demonstrated improved decision making ability on the Career Decision Making Scale.

Work Maturity Skills:

Participants demonstrated statistically significant improvement in sex and ethnic fairness attitudes as measured by the Work Attitude Survey.

Academic Credit:

One elective credit at the secondary school level (grades 7-12) which, for high school students (grades 9-12), may be applied to high school diploma requirement.

Participants' Comments:

> I learned basically what an employer looks for when hiring a new employee, and how to be more confident at interviews.
>
> First of all, when I entered the program I didn't have the slightest idea of what I wanted to do in the future. The career educator and the aides helped me decide. What I learned from them is that I have to decide things for myself and to know what my abilities are and what they are not, to know what I like and what I don't and to have confidence in myself, to love myself and to know some day I'll make it. AVE was a great experience.
>
> I learned to have confidence in myself. Now I know what I want to do with my life.

Parents' Comments:

> She is more eager to get a job now.
>
> Mostly being responsible and getting all of her goals accomplished.
>
> She is more interested in becoming a lawyer.

EDUCATION ASSISTANCE CENTER OF LONG ISLAND, INC.

382 Main Street
Port Washington, New York 11050

The Community-Based Organization

Executive Director: Diana Freed

The Education Assistance Center of Long Island, Inc. is a not-for-profit agency which has been serving Long Island since 1969. Services include alternative high school programs, criminal justice programs, as well as vocational training and counseling.

Program Description

Summer AVE Project Director: Gigi Cresswell

AVE '85 Site Location: Board of Cooperative Education Services
Prospect Avenue
Westbury, New York 11590

Enrollment and Attendance: 50 participants at beginning; 35 at end. Average attendance rate was 66%.

Primary Resources:

Twenty-five (25) resources developed, 18 used, 5 placements. Primary resources used were Nassau County Police Department, Westchester Medical Center, Mercy Hospital, Prospect Avenue Day Care Center, Home Health Aids, and a Volkswagon Dealership.

Instruction:

AVE participants received instruction in career decision-making skills, job application and resume preparation, interviewing techniques, using the want ads, career and vocational exploration, written and oral communication skills, basic mathematics and reading comprehension. Self-evaluation procedures, assessment of life skills and values clarification were also discussed and developed.

1985 Program Evaluation Summary

Basic Skills:

Participants demonstrated improved mathematics performance on the SRA Arithmetic Index.

Participants demonstrated statistically significant gains in reading comprehension as measured by the SRA Reading Index.

Pre-Employment Skills:

Participants demonstrated improved job seeking skills on the Job Seeking Capabilities Test.

Work Maturity Skills:

Participants demonstrated statistically significant improvement in sex and ethnic fairness attitudes as measured by the Work Attitude Survey.

Academic Credit:

One elective credit at the secondary school level (grades 7-12) which, for high school students (grades 9-12), may be applied to high school diploma requirement.

Participants' Comments:

> I learned about Real Estate and how to talk to people. I know now that I need to learn how to get along with others, and how to cope with problems.
>
> I learned that you can go to many different places to explore different careers.
>
> My career choice is computers. Before I didn't know anything about computers but the AVE Program helped me a lot about computers.

Parents' Comments:

> My son has shown more independence and more self-confidence in himself.
>
> She comes home and reads about her career and tells me about it.
>
> He has a better awareness of what career goal he would like to have and is also doing better in school.
>
> She seems to be better in school.

ELMCOR YOUTH AND ADULT ACTIVITIES, INC.

98-94 Astoria Boulevard
East Elmhurst, NY 11369

The Community-Based Organization

Executive Director: Arthur LeVell

Elmcor Youth and Adult Activities, Inc. is a community based non-profit organization founded in 1966. Elmcor is multi-faceted in that it provides both human services and recreational programs to the Queens community. Elmcor's activities include the following: TAP #13, youth employment, SYEP, drug rehabilitation, senior citizens lunch program, basketball league, multi services entitlement outreach, Little League, business assistance program, housing assistance and development, and pre-school and after school programs.

Program Description

Summer AVE Project Director: Arthur LeVell

Location of AVE '85 Site: St. Gabriel Roman Catholic School
98-04 Astoria Boulevard
East Elmhurst, NY 11369

Enrollment and Attendance: 46 participants at beginning of program, 44 at end. The average daily attendance was 89%.

Primary Resources:

One hundred (100) resources were developed, 75 were used, 30 participants received field placements. Primary resources used were a nurse and a health resource coordinator (Health/Medical), a journalist, a poet and radio stations (Communication), a musican and a music teacher (Entertainment), a computer technician (Computers), the MTA Museum and a flight attendant (Transportation), a family worker and a city volunteer program coordinator (Social Services), the Queens District Attorney and a local Police Precinct (Law), a salesman and a broker (Real Estate), a librarian, a school administrator, and a public administrator (Administration), vocational, drug and teen pregnancy counseling, and a hair stylist (Personal Care).

Instruction:

AVE participants received instruction in career decision-making skills, job application and resume preparation, interviewing techniques, using the want ads, career and vocational exploration, written and oral communication skills, basic mathematics and reading comprehension. Self-evaluation procedures, assessment of life skills and values clarification were also discussed and developed.

1985 Program Evaluation Summary

Basic Skills:

Participants demonstrated improved mathematics performance on the SRA Arithmetic Index.

Work Maturity Skills:

Participants demonstrated statistically significant improvement in sex and ethnic fairness attitudes as measured by the Work Attitude Survey.

Academic Credit:

One elective credit at the secondary school level (grades 7-12) which, for high school students (grades 9-12), may be applied to high school diploma requirement.

Participants' Comments:

The outlook it gave us on the different careers and the job market. Overall, I got a lot out of it.

Going out and interviewing people that I was interested in becoming in the future.

When I went to my mini project locations it gave me a chance to meet other people.

Parents' Comments:

AVE has pointed her in the right direction and helped her in her career choices.

The biggest change I have observed of my child was that she has been very responsible and she has learned more about the career that she wants to take in the future. I have seen how she earns the money and spends it on good things. I'm satisfied with the AVE program.

She is very anxious to succeed in school and realize her dream to become a doctor.

ELMIRA NEIGHBORHOOD HOUSE, INC.

Corner Lake and East Fifth Street
Elmira, New York 14901

The Community-Based Organization

Executive Director: Michael T. Gehl

The Elmira Neighborhood House, Inc. is a non-profit multi-purpose community-based agency, mainly serving low income and minority youths in Chemung County. The agency has concentrated its program efforts over the past ten years to the provision of emergency services to people and to the development of services for the youth of Chemung County. The overall goals are to deliver essential and emergency services to those who need them with a minimum of delay and to promote in youth a sound personality, development and social adjustment. The Neighborhood House has a long history in running and working with Youth Employment Programs. It has operated a WEP and a WIN Program through D.S.S. and the J.T.P.A. In-School Senior Work Experience Program and the Exemplary Youth Program.

Program Description

Summer AVE Project Director: Rhoda J. Childs

AVE '85 Site Location: Corner Lake and Fifth Street
Elmira, New York 14901

Enrollment and Attendance: 50 participants at beginning; 47 at end. Average attendance rate was 90%.

Primary Resources:

Fifty-three (53) resources developed, 40 used, 35 placements. Primary resources used were Steele Memorial Library; Arnot Mall; Kodak; Corning Glass Works; Glove House; local banks, hospital, library, SADD, and Division for Youth.

Instruction:

AVE participants received instruction in career decision-making skills, job application and resume preparation, interviewing techniques, using the want ads, career and vocational exploration, written and oral communication skills, basic mathematics and reading comprehension. Self-evaluation procedures, assessment of life skills and values clarification were also discussed and developed.

1985 Program Evaluation Summary

Basic Skills:

Participants demonstrated improved mathematics performance on the SRA Arithmetic Index.

Participants demonstrated statistically significant gains in reading comprehension as measured by the SRA Reading Index.

Pre-Employment Skills:

Participants demonstrated improved decision making ability on the Career Decision Making Scale.

Academic Credit

One elective credit at the secondary school level (grades 7-12) which, for high school students (grades 9-12), may be applied to high school diploma requirement.

Participants' Comments:

> I learned how to improve myself as a person. I also learned how to read better.
>
> I learned that it is not easy to get a job without a High School diploma, although it may be a piece of paper it will be needed if you want a good job.
>
> I learned a lot about math, writing and reading.

Parents' Comments:

> Realizes that jobs and money aren't easy to find and get; learning the value of money. Also, that education is important for future training and getting the best he can.
>
> Has a more definite positive attitude toward a career choice. Also able to utilize other options in regard to college degree, i.e., military.
>
> My daughter has become much more conscientious with money.

HARLEM COUNCIL FOR CHURCH AND COMMUNITY CHANGE

310 Lenox Avenue, Room 307
New York, New York 10027

The Community-Based Organization

Executive Director: Ella S. McDonald

The Harlem Council was organized in the Fall of 1978 to bring together churches and community service programs concerned about the future of Harlem. Harlem Council has a distribution network of donated food and household material to local residents. It also provides transportation for frail, isolated and handicapped citizens, operating three vans (one equipped for wheelchairs) and last year provided more than 15,000 trips for residents of Community Boards 9-10.

Another Council program, the Harlem Striders Track Club, attempts to develop college scholarship possibilities for youth 6-17 through the medium of track and field sports.

Program Description

Summer AVE Project Director: Ella S. McDonald

AVE '85 Site Location: 310 Lenox Avenue
New York, New York 10027

Enrollment and Attendance: 10 participants at beginning; 48 at end. Average attendance rate was 94%.

Primary Resources:

Twenty (20) resources developed, 15 used, 48 placements. Primary resources used were Harlem Hospital Center, Sydenham Neighborhood Family Care Center, Harlem Trailblazers, Harlem Urban Development, Arts & Culture and Chemical Bank.

Instruction:

AVE participants received instruction in career decision-making skills, job application and resume preparation, interviewing techniques, using the want ads, career and vocational exploration, written and oral communication skills, basic mathematics and reading comprehension. Self-evaluation procedures, assessment of life skills and values clarification were also discussed and developed.

1985 Program Evaluation Summary

Basic Skills:

Participants demonstrated statistically significant gains in math performance as measured by the SRA Arithmetic Index.

Participants demonstrated statistically significant gains in reading comprehension as measured by the SRA Reading Index.

Pre-Employment Skills:

Participants demonstrated statistically significant growth in decision making ability as measured by the Career Decision Making Scale.

Participants demonstrated statistically significant growth in job seeking skills as measured by the Job Seeking Capabilities Test.

Work Maturity Skills:

Participants demonstrated statistically significant improvement in sex and ethnic fairness attitudes as measured by the Work Attitude Survey.

Participants' Comments:

> Project AVE was very helpful in preparing me and letting me know that I was either going to be a surgeon or lawyer. But my mind is really set on becoming a lawyer.
>
> I learned not to be scared to speak in front of a crowd.
>
> I learned about my career and how to research.

Parents' Comments:

> She learned how to be on time for a job, how to deal with people better, and how to dress better.
>
> She has self-confidence and is sure that the profession she chose is the right one. She enjoys going to the program and has made new friends as a result. Thank you so much for all you have done.

LATIMER-WOODS ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT ASSOCIATION, INC.

One University Place, Suite 406
Brooklyn, New York 11201

THE COMMUNITY-BASED ORGANIZATION

Executive Director: William Wallace IV

Latimer-Woods Economic Development Association, Inc. was formed and conceived to facilitate the creation and retention of businesses involved in high technology and to support and administer training programs tailored to the needs of high technology.

Program Description

Summer AVE Project Director: Ronald Ashford

AVE '85 Site Location: P.S. 113
300 Adelphi Street
Brooklyn, New York 11205

Enrollment and Attendance: 50 participants at beginning; 49 at end. Average attendance rate was 98%.

Primary Resources:

Thirty-nine (39) resources developed, 24 used, 47 placements. Primary resources used were private businesses located in Brooklyn's recently developed shopping mall located in the Borough Hall area.

Instruction:

AVE participants received instruction in career decision-making skills, job application and resume preparation, interviewing techniques, using the want ads, career and vocational exploration, written and oral communication skills, basic mathematics and reading comprehension. Self-evaluation procedures, assessment of life skills and values clarification were also discussed and developed.

1985 Program Evaluation Summary

Basic Skills:

Participants demonstrated statistically significant gains in math performance as measured by the SRA Arithmetic Index.

Participants demonstrated statistically significant gains in reading comprehension as measured by the SRA Reading Index.

Pre-Employment Skills:

Participants demonstrated improved job seeking skills on the Job Seeking Capabilities Test.

Work Maturity Skills:

Participants demonstrated statistically significant improvement in sex and ethnic fairness attitudes as measured by the Work Attitude Survey.

Academic Credit:

One elective credit at the secondary school level (grades 7-12) which, for high school students (grades 9-12), may be applied to high school diploma requirement.

Participants' Comments:

> They make you feel better about yourself and more confident about yourself.
>
> I learned more about how to get a job, what to do in order to get a job and what job I want. I learned how to manage myself.
>
> I learned new things about subjects in school that I should have known before.

Parents' Comments:

> She learned to behave and act as a young lady should act with a responsibility. Became very neat and took her life at becoming an adult more seriously.
>
> He was thinking negatively prior to AVE, now he is talking about working and learning more next summer.
>
> He gets up and goes whether he wants to or not. He's learned a lot about the outside world. He has more respect for his teachers.

NATIONAL SOCIETY FOR HEBREW DAY SCHOOLS

160 Broadway
New York, New York 10038

The Community-Based Organization

Executive Director: Rabbi Barry Oustatcher

We are the Board of Education for the Hebrew Day Schools throughout the United States. We provide literature, workshops, and job training programs for the many youth in and out of our schools.

Program Description

Summer AVE Project Director: Rabbi A. Moshe Possick

AVE '85 Site Location: 160 Broadway
New York, New York 10038

Enrollment and Attendance: 47 participants at beginning; 45 at end. Average attendance rate 89%.

Primary Resources:

Eighty-five (85) resources were developed, 61 used and 27 placements. Primary resources used were computer experts, bookkeepers, carpenters, cooks, secretaries, teachers, safety officers, diamond cutters, jewelry merchants, retailers, and manufacturers.

Instruction:

AVE participants received instruction in career decision-making skills, job application and resume preparation, interviewing techniques, using the want ads, career and vocational exploration, written and oral communication skills, basic mathematics and reading comprehension. Self-evaluation procedures, assessment of life skills and values clarification were also discussed and developed.

1985 Program Evaluation Summary

Basic Skills:

Participants demonstrated statistically significant gains in math performance as measured by the SRA Arithmetic Index.

Participants demonstrated statistically significant gains in reading comprehension as measured by the SRA Reading Index.

Pre-Employment Skills:

Participants demonstrated statistically significant growth in decision making ability as measured by the Career Decision Making Scale.

Participants demonstrated statistically significant growth in job seeking skills as measured by the Job Seeking Capabilities Test.

Work Maturity Skills:

Participants demonstrated statistically significant improvement in sex and ethnic fairness attitudes as measured by the Work Attitude Survey.

Academic Credit:

One elective credit at the secondary school level (grades 7-12) which, for high school students (grades 9-12), may be applied to high school diploma requirement.

Participants' Comments:

> Because of AVE I now have a clearer view about the kind of job I would want in the future.
>
> I learned how to be more conscientious about school work and how to look for a job after I have finished High School.
>
> Everything was helpful. I learned how to find a job and keep it.

Parents' Comments

> My child has become more responsible and serious about the future.
>
> He now knows how to look into the job market.
>
> He is more aware of the job market.

NATIONAL COUNCIL OF NEGRO WOMEN OF GREATER NEW YORK, INC.

815 Second Avenue, 9th Floor
New York, New York 10017

The Community-Based Organization

Executive Director: Denise Pedro

The National Council of Negro Women (NCNW) was established for the purpose of designing, developing and implementing a city-wide social leadership development consortium. It is the purpose of the consortium to harness individual and collective efforts around the issues which impact on black families in areas such as health, education, employment, housing, career planning and child development.

Program Description

Summer AVE Project Director: Denise Pedro

AVE '85 Site Location: I.S. 49
Warren and Hill Street
Staten Island, New York 10304

Enrollment and Attendance: 50 participants at beginning; 47 at end. Average attendance rate was 94%.

Primary Resources:

Forty-seven (47) resources developed, 30 used, 32 placements. Primary resources used were Donnell Library, Staten Island District Attorney, New York Stock Exchange, WRKS and WBLS Radio, Staten Island Advance, Wagner College Computer Center, St. Vincents Medical Center, Snug Harbor Arts Expo, NBC Studio, Staten Island Hospital, Proctor & Gamble, South Beach Psychiatric, Barbizon School for Modeling, Police Headquarters, College of Staten Island, Drake Business School, Bayley Seton Hospital, Vanderbilt Avenue Nursing Home, Mistrel Aviation, Kerizma Beauty Salon, Thomas Spicer Cocnrete, South Avenue Auto Service & Repair, Sollozzo Plumbing Company, Seamans Society for Children, Ruth Browns Beauty Salon, and Medgers Evers College.

Instruction:

AVE participants received instruction in career decision-making skills, job application and resume preparation, interviewing techniques, using the want ads, career and vocational exploration, written and oral communication skills, basic mathematics and reading comprehension. Self-evaluation procedures, assessment of life skills and values clarification were also discussed and developed.

1985 Program Evaluation Summary

Basic Skills:

Participants demonstrated statistically significant gains in math performance as measured by the SRA Arithmetic Index.

Participants demonstrated improved performance in reading comprehension on the SRA Reading Index.

Pre-Employment Skills:

Participants demonstrated improved decision making ability on the Career Decision Making Scale.

Work Maturity Skills:

Participants demonstrated statistically significant improvement in sex and ethnic fairness attitudes as measured by the Work Attitude Survey.

Academic Credit:

One elective credit at the secondary school level (grades 7-12) which, for high school students (grades 9-12), may be applied to high school diploma requirement.

Participants' Comments:

> The program has showed me how to think positive about myself, that no one can stop you from doing what you want if you put your mind to it.
>
> I learned important things such as writing resumes, cover letters, and filling out application.
>
> I learned how to cope and get along with other people, and I also learned how to speak and prepare for an interview.

Parents' Comments:

> My daughter has a more positive attitude about work.
>
> Child has developed good motivation and interest. Through exposures from AVE is now reassessing her career goal.
>
> She knows what she really wants to be and she is working harder to get it.

ROCKLAND COMMUNITY ACTION COUNCIL, INC.

54 North Main Street Main Office
Spring Valley, New York 10977

The Community-Based Organization

Executive Director: Ms. Yvonne M. Smith

Rockland Community Action Council, Inc. (RCAC) is the only countywide agency of its kind in Rockland County, reaching a total of 250,000 people in the 1970's with expectations of reaching 450,000 persons by the end of 1985. RCAC's role of "OMBUDSAGENCY" encourages efficient and effective community service across the board. RCAC continues to reach into the pockets of poverty by administering a number of needed services. RCAC has grown into a multi-faceted organization geared toward the needs of the community at large.

Program Description

Summer AVE Project Director: Ms. Stella Marrs

AVE '85 Site Location: 185 North Main Street
Spring Valley, New York 10977
Rockland Community College Satellite

Enrollment and Attendance: 50 participants at beginning; 47 at end. Average attendance rate was 80%.

Primary Resources:

Forty-five (45) resources developed, 37 used; each participant had at least one field exploration to a career of their choice. Primary resources used were Orange and Rockland Utilities, Sheriff's Office, County Court House, a word processing company, a computer company, Bureau of Motor Vehicles, civil and corporate lawyers, judges, Rockland Journal News, Office of Rockland Senator, Rockland Community College, Lederle Laboratories, Project Rainbow, Adolescent Parenting, Rabbi Possick, Spring Valley Airport, General Foods, Culinary Institute, Lynn Photography Studio, Fashion Institute, a fast food establishment, Stony Point Battlefield Museum, Rockland Lake Park, a children's apparel store, Nanuet Mall, Pomona Health Center Complex, Nyack Hospital, Specialized Business Systems, Spring Valley Village Hall, New York Stock Exchange, Federal Hall, and South Street Seaport.

Instruction:

AVE participants received instruction in career decision-making skills, job application and resume preparation, interviewing techniques, using the want ads, career and vocational exploration, written and oral communication skills, basic mathematics and reading comprehension. Self-evaluation procedures, assessment of life skills and values clarification were also discussed and developed.

1985 Program Evaluation Summary

Basic Skills:

Participants demonstrated statistically significant gains in math performance as measured by the SRA Arithmetic Index.

Participants demonstrated statistically significant gains in reading comprehension as measured by the SRA Reading Index.

Pre-Employment Skills:

Participants demonstrated improved decision making ability on the Career Decision Making Scale.

Participants demonstrated statistically significant growth in job seeking skills as measured by the Job Seeking Capabilities Test.

Work Maturity Skills:

Participants demonstrated statistically significant improvement in sex and ethnic fairness attitudes as measured by the Work Attitude Survey.

Academic Credit:

One elective credit at the secondary school level (grades 7-12) which, for high school students (grades 9-12), may be applied to high school diploma requirement.

Participants' Comments:

> I learned a lot of things. How to go and get a job, how to act on an interview and also how to interview other people.
>
> I learned that I can be anything I want to be as long as I put my mind to it by learning about careers, have good work habits, and knowledge in basic skills.
>
> I learned what kind of job I want and what I'm capable of doing. I also learned how to write a resume and fill out an application.

Parents' Comments:

> She's more positive of being something good in the future.
>
> She showed more responsibility for herself. She felt very good about participating in the program. She met a lot of new friends and has a good outlook on her new school year.
>
> Reading, working, and math improved.

SOUTHEAST BRONX NEIGHBORHOOD CENTER, INC.
955 Tinton Avenue
Bronx, New York 10456

The Community-Based Organization

Executive Director: Ms. Betsy Goldstein

Southeast Bronx Neighborhood Center, Inc., founded in 1945 as the Forest Neighborhood Houses, was reincorporated in its present form. The Center provides community services to senior citizens, and mentally and physically disabled adults and youth. The Center serves as an advocate for the needs of the Southeast Bronx community.

Program Description

Summer AVE Project Director: Ms. Thelma Harper

AVE '85 Site Location: 890 Cauldwell Avenue
Bronx, New York 10456

Enrollment and Attendance: 50 participants at beginning; 46 at end. Average attendance rate 90%.

Primary Resources:

Eighty-one (81) resources were developed, 47 used, 46 placements. Primary resources used were the Bronx County Courthouse, Community Planning Board, Bronx Lebanon and Lincoln Hospitals, local fire house, Unity Funeral Chapel, and Northside Transmissions.

Instruction:

AVE participants received instruction in career decision-making skills, job application and resume preparation, interviewing techniques, using the want ads, career and vocational exploration, written and oral communication skills, basic mathematics and reading comprehension. Self-evaluation procedures, assessment of life skills and values clarification were also discussed and developed.

1985 Program Evaluation Summary

Basic Skills:

Participants demonstrated statistically significant gains in math performance as measured by the SRA Arithmetic Index.

Pre-Employment Skills:

Participants demonstrated statistically significant growth in decision making ability as measured by the Career Decision Making Scale.

Work Maturity Skills:

Participants demonstrated more positive sex and ethnic fairness attitudes on the Work Attitude Survey.

Academic Credit:

One elective credit at the secondary school level (grades 7-12) which, for high school students (grades 9-12), may be applied to high school diploma requirement.

Participants' Comments:

> I learned how to conduct myself on an interview. I learned how to "dress for success", to write a resume and to write a cover letter.
>
> Project AVE has helped me to decide on my career choice, which is to become an architect.
>
> While I was in Project AVE, I learned how to research for the important information of my career choice. I learned how to make my own decisions, to be responsible and to be independent in my career choice. I also learned that working to reach the top in your career is very hard, and having a lot of confidence in yourself will help you to reach the top.

Parents' Comments

> She now wants to go and get her education, go to college and get out in the world and work.
>
> She was more interested in attending the AVE classes than regular school. And she seems to be very interested in a follow-up program in computers and nursing.
>
> I found that my son was more willing to be a part of AVE than school. He really enjoyed the "learn and earn" program. He always had conversations about his day's activities, he even didn't mind getting up in the early morning.

SPORTS FOUNDATION, INC.

518 Willis Avenue
Bronx, New York 10455

The Community-Based Organization

Executive Director: Mr. Robert Williams

Sports Foundation, Inc. is an administrative organization which acts as an intermediary corporation in support of local community-based organizations which service youth. It utilizes sports as a catalyst to recruit youth through expert sports training and scheduled activities to expose community youth, both male and female, to new opportunities in education, career options, and health.

Program Description

Summer AVE Project Director: Mr. Cecil Sievers

AVE '85 Site Location: I.S. 184
778 Forest Avenue
Bronx, New York 10456

Enrollment and Attendance: 49 participants at beginning; 48 at end. Average attendance rate 100%.

Primary Resources:

Sixty-three (63) resources developed, 40 used, 49 placements. Primary resources used were New York Public Library, Hunter and City Colleges, SUNY Binghamton, Royal Business School, Marvel Comics, Harlem Hospital, New York State Attorney General;s Office, American Institute of Aeronautics and Astronautics, and Bronx Office Department of City Planning.

Instruction:

AVE participants received instruction in career decision-making skills, job application and resume preparation, interviewing techniques, using the want ads, career and vocational exploration, written and oral communication skills, basic mathematics and reading comprehension. Self-evaluation procedures, assessment of life skills and values clarification were also discussed and developed.

1985 Program Evaluation Summary

Basic Skills:

Participants demonstrated statistically significant gains in math performance as measured by the SRA Arithmetic Index.

Participants demonstrated statistically significant gains in reading comprehension as measured by the SRA Reading Index.

Pre-Employment Skills:

Participants demonstrated statistically significant growth in job seeking skills as measured by the Job Seeking Capabilities Test.

Work Maturity Skills:

Participants demonstrated statistically significant improvement in sex and ethnic fairness attitudes as measured by the Work Attitude Survey.

Academic Credit:

One elective credit at the secondary school level (grades 7-12) which, for high school students (grades 9-12), may be applied to high school diploma requirement.

Participants' Comments:

> I learned how to get along with people much better. I also learned how to write checks and fill out an application.
>
> I learned from the A.V.E. program that you have to take responsibility for your life.
>
> I learned that when you are looking for a job, you have to dress for the business world and have good manners.

Parents' Comments

> She has more of a sense of responsibility. She is more reasonable and understanding. She wants to learn more. At first she didn't want to attend classes, then after the first few days she said she liked it and was glad she went.
>
> She keeps saying that she's going to make it.
>
> He is more responsible. He is also motivated to work harder in his studies.
>
> She knows more about the business world, dressing code, interviews, etc.

SOUTHERN QUEENS PARK ASSOCIATION, INC.
90-40 150 Street
Jamaica, New York 11451

The Community-Based Organization

Executive Director: Solomon Goodrich

The Southern Queens Park Association was incorporated on November 5, 1975, and was formed to accept the 54 acre surplus property of the St. Albans Naval Hospital. The purpose of the Association is a) to establish, equip, maintain, and operate sports-recreation facilities for the people of Southern Queens, b) to improve the health, culture, education, and employment opportunities of the citizens of the community, and c) to operate the facility in an economically self-sufficient way as much as possible.

Program Description

Summer AVE Project Director: Joseph Stigger

AVE '85 Site Location: 90-40 150th Street
Jamaica, New York 11451

Enrollment and Attendance: 49 participants at beginning; 43 at end. Average attendance rate was 96%.

Primary Resources:

Seventy-five (75) resources developed, 46 used, 43 placements. Primary resources used were CBS, Inc., U.S. Post Office, Queens Court House, local fire department, New York Stock Echange, SCS Business Institute, Mystic Modeling Agency, Mary Immaculate Hospital, Queensboro Public Library, and York College.

Instruction:

AVE participants received instruction in career decision-making skills, job application and resume preparation, interviewing techniques, using the want ads, career and vocational exploration, written and oral communication skills, basic mathematics and reading comprehension. Self-evaluation procedures, assessment of life skills and values clarification were also discussed and developed.

1985 Program Evaluation Summary

Basic Skills:

Participants demonstrated statistically significant gains in math performance as measured by the SRA Arithmetic Index.

Participants demonstrated statistically significant gains in reading comprehension as measured by the SRA Reading Index.

Participants demonstrated statistically significant gains in reading comprehension as measured by the SRA Reading Index.

Pre-Employment Skills:

Participants demonstrated improved decision making ability on the Career Decision Making Scale.

Participants demonstrated statistically significant growth in job seeking skills as measured by the Job Seeking Capabilities Test.

Work Maturity Skills:

Participants demonstrated statistically significant improvement in sex and ethnic fairness attitudes as measured by the Work Attitude Survey.

Academic Credit:

One elective credit at the secondary school level (grades 7-12) which, for high school students (grades 9-12), may be applied to high school diploma requirement.

Participants' Comments:

> I learned more about myself and also I have a very positive attitude towards the future.
>
> I learned about the educational requirements for my career and how to go about finding a job.
>
> I learned what I want to do when I get out of high school, such as what colleges to go to because of my career interest.

Parents' Comments:

> My child is more encouraged in finding a job and has a lot of confidence in herself.
>
> I guess the biggest change is that she has opened up more at home and dealing better with others.
>
> My child is now eager to complete high school and find a job.

TOMPKINS COUNTY JOB TRAINING PROGRAM

318 North Albany Street
Ithaca, New York 14850

The Community-Based Organization

Executive Director: Randy Harmon

The Tompkins County Job Training Program is part of the Cayuga/Cortland/Tompkins Service Delivery Area for the purposes of the Job Training Partnership Act. The Job Training Program administers and delivers training and employment programs under the Job Training Partnership Act in Tompkins County.

Program Description

Summer AVE Project Director: Geri J. Roebal

AVE '85 Site Location: 318 North Albany Street
Ithaca, New York 14850

Enrollment and Attendance: 25 participants at beginning; 22 at end. Average attendance rate was 84%.

Primary Resources:

Forty-six (46) resources developed, 46 used, 21 placements. Primary resources used were Tompkins Community Hospital, Cornell University Vet School, Gannett Health Center, Tompkins County Trust Co., SPCA, Montessori Pre-School, Teen Parent Program, Day Care Council, Crime Prevention Fair, Family and Children's Service, Probation Department, Group Homes of Tompkins County, Alternative Community School, T-S-T BOCES, several radio stations, a physician, a pediatrician, a law student, and a photographer.

Instruction:

AVE participants received instruction in career decision-making skills, job application and resume preparation, interviewing techniques, using the want ads, career and vocational exploration, written and oral communication skills, basic mathematics and reading comprehension. Self-evaluation procedures, assessment of life skills and values clarification were also discussed and developed.

1985 Program Evaluation Summary

Basic Skills:

Participants demonstrated improved performance in reading comprehension on the SRA Reading Index.

Pre-Employment Skills:

Participants demonstrated improved decision making ability on the Career Decision Making Scale.

Participants demonstrated improved job seeking skills on the Job Seeking Capabilities Test.

Work Maturity Skills:

Participants demonstrated more positive sex and ethnic fairness attitudes on the Work Attitude Survey.

Academic Credit:

One elective credit at the secondary school level (grades 7-12) which, for high school students (grades 9-12), may be applied to high school diploma requirement.

Participants' Comments:

> I learned what to say at a job interview.
>
> I learned how to write a resume, learned more about myself, and how to find a job that suits me.
>
> They helped me figure out what I really want in my life—as far as schooling and a career.

Parents' Comments:

> Briefly, I would say he is more motivated and it was a great inspiration for him.
>
> She wants to learn more.
>
> My child is a little more independent as far as figuring out transportation to a job, and becoming more responsible about work.

URBAN LEAGUE OF ALBANY AREA, INC.

95 Livingston Avenue
Albany, New York 12207

The Community-Based Organization

Executive Director: Lloyd James Oxford

The Urban League of the Albany Area, Inc. has continually been in the forefront in providing counseling services, employment services, economic development, advocacy and supportive services for socio-economically disadvantaged populations in the Albany area. Under the supervision of its Health, Human and Education Department, the agency has successfully demonstrated its effectiveness in providng and operating youth-oriented programs. Through funding by the New York State Department of Labor, the Albany urban League has operated the AVE program from 1980 to 1985.

Program Description

Summer AVE Project Director: Mary W. Bullock

AVE '85 Site Location: Arbor Hill Elementary School
Lark and Arbor Drives
Albany, New York 12207

Enrollment and Attendance: 46 participants at beginning; 39 at end. Average attendance rate was 91%.

Primary Resources:

Ninety-five (95) resources developed, 70 used, 44 placements. Primary resources used were state and government agencies, community people, business organizations, private and public agencies, service organizations, and television stations.

Instruction:

AVE participants received instruction in career decision-making skills, job application and resume preparation, interviewing techniques, using the want ads, career and vocational exploration, written and oral communication skills, basic mathematics and reading comprehension. Self-evaluation procedures, assessment of life skills and values clarification were also discussed and developed.

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1985 Program Evaluation Summary

Basic Skills:

Participants demonstrated statistically significant gains in math performance as measured by the SRA Arithmetic Index.

Participants demonstrated improved performance in reading comprehension on the SRA Reading Index.

Pre-Employment Skills:

Participants demonstrated statistically significant growth in decision making ability as measured by the Career Decision Making Scale.

Participants demonstrated improved job seeking skills on the Job Seeking Capabilities Test.

Work Maturity Skills:

Participants demonstrated statistically significant improvement in sex and ethnic fairness attitudes as measured by the Work Attitude Survey.

Academic Credit:

One elective credit at the secondary school level (grades 7-12) which, for high school students (grades 9-12), may be applied to high school diploma requirement.

Participants' Comments:

> I learned that I don't want to be a lawyer, doctor, or teacher. I want to be a computer operator; also how to write a resume, fill out applications, make appointments and talk to your employer.
>
> I learned about how to be prepared for a job interview. I also learned how to budget.
>
> I learned how to apply for a job and how to act during an interview.

Parents' Comments:

> She has learned to adjust better to becoming a responsible adult.
>
> He has become more active and responsible.
>
> She has been more responsible.

URBAN LEAGUE OF ONONDAGA COUNTY, INC.
825 South Saline Street
Syracuse, New York 13203

The Community-Based Organization

Executive Director: Leon E. Modeste

The Urban League of Onondaga County, Inc., as an affiliate of the National League, was established in Syracuse, New York in 1964. The Urban League is a non-profit, interracial, non-partisan agency whose primary mission is to enhance and increase the opportunities of blacks and other minorities socio-economically in proportion with majority members of our society.

THE SUMMER AVE PROGRAM

Summer AVE Project Director: Jerri L. Starks

AVE '85 Site Location: 2306 South Salina Street
Syracuse, New York 13210

Enrollment and Attendance: 50 participants at beginning; 44 at end. Average attendance rate was 80%.

Primary Resources:

Sixty-eight (68) resources developed, 52 used, 50 placements. Primary resources used were Urban League of Onondaga, Syracuse Unviersity, United Way, and Upstate Medical Center.

Instruction:

AVE participants received instruction in career decision-making skills, job application and resume preparation, interviewing techniques, using the want ads, career and vocational exploration, written and oral communication skills, basic mathematics and reading comprehension. Self-evaluation procedures, assessment of life skills and values clarification were also discussed and developed.

1985 Program Evaluation Summary

Basic Skills:

Participants demonstrated statistically significant gains in math performance as measured by the SRA Arithmetic Index.

Participants demonstrated improved performance in reading comprehension on the SRA Reading Index.

Work Maturity Skills:

Participants demonstrated more positive sex and ethnic fairness attitudes on the Work Attitude Survey.

Academic Credit:

One elective credit at the secondary school level (grades 7-12) which, for high school students (grades 9-12), may be applied to high school diploma requirement.

Participants' Comments:

> I used to think that going to school was not a good possibility (too expensive) but the college tours were great and I also learned how important it is to do well in school. I also learned more about interviews.
>
> I learned something about the career I want to participate in. I had a chance to experience the job by going out and doing it at my job placement site.

Parents' Comments:

> He depends more on himself.
>
> My child has a better attitude, different look, much more understanding about how the job system works.
>
> She does get along better with others, and she is more enthusiastic and has more get up and go.
>
> Seems more interested in completing school work, seemed to exhibit a better feeling of himself.

URBAN LEAGUE OF ROCHESTER, N. Y., INC.

177 North Clinton Avenue
Rochester, New York 14604

The Community-Based Organization

Executive Director: William A. Johnson, Jr.

The Urban League of Rochester, N. Y., Inc. is a non-profit community based organization, providing direct services to the low income and minority populations in the Rochester area. The United Way of Greater Rochester has designated the Urban League of Rochester as a community Planning and Human Services Delivery Agency.

Program Description

Summer AVE Project Director: Lynda M. Bryant

AVE '85 Site Location: 54 Oakman Street
Rochester, New York, 14605

Enrollment and Attendance: 50 participants at beginning; 48 at end. Average attendance rate was 98%.

Primary Resources:

Twenty-five (25) resources developed, 25 used, 48 placements. Primary resources used were Urban League of Rochester, Public Safety Building, E. F. Hutton, Eastman Kodak Company, St. Ann's Home, Hochstein School of Music, Eltrex Industries, Darlene's Models, Computer Consoles, Hall of Justice, Democrat & Chronicle publications, Air Force Recruiting Center, and Elmwood Pediatrics.

Instruction:

AVE participants received instruction in career decision-making skills, job application and resume preparation, interviewing techniques, using the want ads, career and vocational exploration, written and oral communication skills, basic mathematics and reading comprehension. Self-evaluation procedures, assessment of life skills and values clarification were also discussed and developed.

1985 Program Evaluation Summary

Basic Skills:

Participants demonstrated statistically significant gains in math performance as measured by the SRA Arithmetic Index.

Participants demonstrated statistically significant gains in reading comprehension as measured by the SRA Reading Index.

Pre-Employment Skills:

Participants demonstrated improved decision making ability on the Career Decision Making Scale.

Participants demonstrated statistically significant growth in job seeking skills as measured by the Job Seeking Capabilities Test.

Work Maturity Skills:

Participants demonstrated more positive sex and ethnic fairness attitudes on the Work Attitude Survey.

Academic Credit:

One elective credit at the secondary school level (grades 7-12) which, for high school students (grades 9-12), may be applied to high school diploma requirement.

Participants' Comments:

> I learned that A.V.E. helps to prepare you for the outside world of work. It will get you started with making plans and decisions about your career.
>
> I learned how to dress properly for a job interview from one of our guest speakers. I learned how to prepare for a job with the help from Mrs. Dana Lee and Mrs. Wilcox. I also learned how to prepare myself for the working world in the near future.
>
> Well AVE helped me know what I want to be in my life. Because I didn't know that before.
>
> I learned exactly what a pediatrician does during the course of the day. I learned how to deal with co-workers in various situations. I also learned more responsibility and certain things that need to be done to be a good worker.

Parents' Comments:

> He saw the real purpose of having and keeping a job.
>
> He knows how to handle himself towards the job. He has become aware that he has to work hard to survive.
>
> She is more serious about things she wants to do. She has a positive attitude now about making it through school and working.

VANNGUARD URBAN IMPROVEMENT ASSOCIATION, INC.

556 Nostrand Avenue
Brooklyn, New York 11216

The Community-Based Organization

Executive Director: George Glee, Jr.

Vannguard Urban Improvement Association is a community based non-profit organization which fosters community improvement projects for the Central Brooklyn community. Several community projects include beautification and cleanup, youth career education, summer youth employment, voter registration, weatherization program, summer day camp, Adopt-A-Lot program, homeowners and home buyers assistance program, senior citizens arts and crafts program, and many more.

Program Description

Summer AVE Project Director: Martin A. Drew

AVE '85 Site Location: David Ruggles J.H.S. 258
141 Macon Street
Brooklyn, New York 11216

Enrollment and Attendance: 55 participants at beginning; 51 at end. Average attendance rate was 89%.

Primary Resources:

One hundred twenty-three (123) resources developed, 23 used, 49 placements. Primary resources used were College of New Rochelle, Caledonian Hospital, - Family Dynamics, Daily Challege Newspaper, Bed<Stuy Community Legal Services, Center for Art/Culture, St. Joseph Children Services, Brooklyn Adult Learning Center, Bill Holiday Theater, Bureau of Child Welfare, Crown Garden Housing Corporation, Divsion of Human Rights, a physician, and a travel agency.

Instruction:

AVE participants received instruction in career decision-making skills, job application and resume preparation, interviewing techniques, using the want ads, career and vocational exploration, written and oral communication skills, basic mathematics and reading comprehension. Self-evaluation procedures, assessment of life skills and values clarification were also discussed and developed.

1985 Program Evaluation Summary

Basic Skills:

Participants demonstrated statistically significant gains in math performance as measured by the SRA Arithmetic Index.

Participants demonstrated statistically significant gains in reading comprehension as measured by the SRA Reading Index.

Pre-Employment Skills:

Participants demonstrated statistically significant growth in job seeking skills as measured by the Job Seeking Capabilities Test.

Work Maturity Skills:

Participants demonstrated statistically significant improvement in sex and ethnic fairness attitudes as measured by the Work Attitude Survey.

Academic Credit:

One elective credit at the secondary school level (grades 7-12) which, for high school students (grades 9-12), may be applied to high school diploma requirement.

Participants' Comments:

> I learned some words I never knew before and I never saw real trials in a court room. I never knew who an entreprenuer was. Thanks to AVE, I know these things now.
>
> It made me see more of my future of what I want to be. To respect other people. Also I learned more of sexual and child abuse and most important the AVE program taught me to be what you want to be and be the best.
>
> I learned about how to go out and gather information for my future career. I also learned to conduct myself as an intelligent young lady in general.

Parents' Comments:

> Has more of a desire to do well in school. Knows more about job interviews, resume writing.
>
> I think she loved working at Caledonian Hospital as a volunteer. She got a Certificate of Appreciation. She loved dealing with her own money she knew she earned.
>
> I've noticed a change in the rights and respect of others. Also a better attitude about time being an important factor in regard to keeping appointments and working responsibility.

YONKERS COMMUNITY ACTION PROGRAM, INC.
164 Ashburton Avenue
Yonkers, New York 10701

The Community-Based Organization

Executive Director: Judith Wilson

The Yonkers Community Action Program, Inc. (CAP) has traditionally offeres services to the poor, as the largest conduit of federal, state, and local anti-poverty funds in Yonkers. We offer programs in youth development, job training, Head Start, S.Y.E.P., adult services, clerical skills, emergency food distribution, crisis intervention, and welfare advocacy. The agency has just completed its first year of operating a STEP program for out-of-school youth.

Program Description

Summer AVE Project Director: Nannie Dickerson

AVE '85 Site Location: 164 Ashburton Avenue
Yonkers, New York 10701

Enrollment and Attendance: 51 participants at beginning; 51 at end. Average attendance rate was 94%.

Primary Resources:

Forty-eight (48) resources developed, 18 used, 10 placements. Primary resources used were Yonkers General Hospital, Yonkers Department of Social Services (Homeless Unit), Y.C.A.P., Graham-Windham Home (Infirmary), and a carpenter.

Instruction:

AVE participants received instruction in career decision-making skills, job application and resume preparation, interviewing techniques, using the want ads, career and vocational exploration, written and oral communication skills, basic mathematics and reading comprehension. Self-evaluation procedures, assessment of life skills and values clarification were also discussed and developed.

1985 Program Evaluation Summary

Basic Skills:

Participants demonstrated statistically significant gains in math performance as measured by the SRA Arithmetic Index.

Participants demonstrated improved performance in reading comprehension on the SRA Reading Index.

Pre-Employment Skills:

Participants demonstrated statistically significant growth in decision making ability as measured by the Career Decision Making Scale.

Participants demonstrated improved job seeking skills on the Job Seeking Capabilities Test.

Work Maturity Skills:

Participants demonstrated more positive sex and ethnic fairness attitudes on the Work Attitude Survey.

Academic Credit:

One elective credit at the secondary school level (grades 7-12) which, for high school students (grades 9-12), may be applied to high school diploma requirement.

Participants' Comments:

> I learned how to go on an interview, how to communicate with others; also how to fill out an application form correctly.
>
> Project AVE was very helpful to me in planning and preparing for my future and to know more about my career interests.
>
> I learned that you must know and understand yourself. And you must know what needs and values are.

Parents' Comments:

> My child is accountable for his actions.
>
> My child is eager to be independent from a financial standpoint.
>
> My child is aware of competition in the job market, pushing to better himself in the various aspects of self-development/improvement.